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ARABIA

By H. St. J. B. PHILBY

C.I.E., B.A.(Cantab.), F.R.G.S., M.R.A.S. ; Late of the Indian Civil Service; Formerly Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, Iraq, and Chief British Representative in Trans-Jordan; Founder's Medallist of the Royal Geographical Society; and First Burton Memorial Medallist of the Royal Asiatic Society; Author of *The Heart of Arabia*, ~~and~~ *Arabia of the Wahhabis*

T Arabian Jubilee.

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TO

L. H. M. H.

Wouldst thou the Pleiad to Canopus wed ?
Ah, God ! how, prithee, may the twain unite ?
His rays, new-risen, are on Yaman shed ;
While she at zenith lends to Sham her light.

From the Arabic.

PREFACE

THIS volume in no wise professes to be an exhaustive treatise on the history of modern Arabia, being rather a sketch designed for the use of those members of the general public—Members of Parliament, journalists, business men and the like—who may be desirous of understanding something of the principal forces and tendencies which have been at work in the desert spaces of the Arabian peninsula during comparatively modern times. Such information is readily available to the intelligent seeker regarding most of the countries of the world; but in this respect Arabia differs materially from her neighbours. Her glorious past has so dazzled both students and scholars that they forget her present existence and confine the works which these pour forth for those to pore over to an epoch which came to an end nigh a thousand years ago. Perhaps the present or the recent past of Arabia shines with too dim a flame to attract a world so engrossed in the main currents of modern civilisation; but there are already welcome signs of the passing of that apathy and of a growing curiosity about the affairs of a land long believed to be dead enough to be relegated to the realm of legend and romance.

This growing curiosity is confronted by an extraordinary dearth of matter to browse on. Travellers' tales and occasional newspaper articles are to be had in ever-increasing plenty, providing glimpses here and there into an arena generally veiled from our gaze by a pall of flying sand. But no serious attempt appears ever to have been made to delineate its features as a

Arabic historian who died more than a century ago after having completed a chronicle of the early development of Wahhabism, which remains to this day the standard work on the subject, and without which our knowledge of eighteenth-century Arabia would be meagre indeed. Yet the work of Husain ibn Ghannam al Najdi, a history of the life and work of the great Wahhabi prophet and of the early struggles of the new Islam, appears never to have been used hitherto in the preparation of such treatises and monographs on the history of Wahhabism as have appeared from time to time since his manuscript was completed shortly before his death in the first decade of last century. He was indeed followed in the fifth decade of the nineteenth century by another Arabian historian, ‘Uthman ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Bishr al Hanbali, who rewrote the history of his predecessor and brought it up to date on the basis of his own knowledge and researches, and who has popularly superseded Ibn Ghannam as the standard authority on Wahhabi history. To my mind, however, the earlier writer is fully deserving of recognition as the father of modern Arabian history, of whose events he was an eye-witness as well as a painstaking though often tedious annalist; and I may therefore claim something of originality for my own work in that I have made his the basis of my earlier chapters and followed him faithfully through the somewhat dreary record of the early struggles of Wahhabi puritanism at the risk of wearying my readers, and in the hope of reflecting something of the spirit that inspired the old historian and his contemporaries. Without a full understanding of the grim struggle for existence which marked the early days of the Wahhabi dispensation it would be well-nigh impossible to appreciate the Arabia of to-day.

Having thus in general and in particular rendered thanks where thanks are due for help, I turn for a moment in grateful homage to one whose kindly encouragement has been more than a decisive factor in the completion of my labours. *Lau laki lima khalaqtu 'l aflak.*

H. St. J. B. P.

Jidda, January 1, 1930.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE v

INTRODUCTION xv

CHAPTER I

Arabia before Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab . . 1

CHAPTER II

Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab and Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud 8

CHAPTER III

Wahhabi Imperialism: ‘Abdul ‘Aziz I ibn Sa‘ud . 29

CHAPTER IV

Beginnings of Wahhabi Empire 57

CHAPTER V

The First Wahhabi Empire 77

CHAPTER VI

Arabia under the Egyptians 103

CHAPTER VII

The House of Ibn Rashid 128

the great dam of Marib. At any rate for 1500 years or so before that event, which represents the final collapse of man's last defensive struggle with the forces of Nature, Arabia played a remarkable if not outstanding part in the political, intellectual and economic life of the civilised world as it then was. Arabia was the lap of luxury from which the courts and epicures of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean drew their supplies of exotic aids to the enjoyment of life. And thence came frankincense and myrrh for the Egyptian mummies; apes and peacocks for the delectation of Solomon; gold for the treasuries of the world; and spices for its kitchens. It matters little whether these desirable products emanated, wholly or partly, from Arabian soil itself, or were brought to its southern shores by the enterprise of its mariners scouring the seas of the Far East. The proceeds of their sale in the marts of the West facilitated the development in the south and west of Arabia of indigenous civilisations of which we know all too little, though the little we know would seem to justify the assumption that a considerable degree of prosperity existed in lands now relegated to the tender mercies of the villager and nomad. Minæa and Sabæa are names of romance and mystery kingdoms of whose duration we cannot speak with any certainty. Of the Himyarites and other nations or tribes barely mentioned by the old geographers we know equally little. Mecca and Madina—at one time a flourishing colony of Jews—were important stations on a great trade route. And further north, we still know little, though much more, of the Nabatæans, the last link in the transport service, with their capital at Petra. A sort of Monroe doctrine, strictly reserving the handling of the luxury trade within the limits of Arabia to Arabian middlemen and carriers, appears to have kept the country aloof from its neighbours despite the great mutual importance of the one to the other; and may have served to heighten the prevalent impression of the fabulous wealth of Araby, which towards the end of the last century before Christ tempted Imperial Rome into an imperialistic gesture in the direction of the spice-country. Ælius Gallus, the commander of the expedition, and perhaps the first European to rank as an explorer of Arabia, discovered to his mortification that Arabia Felix was in much the same condition as it is to this day—a desert land with patches of prosperity. How long it had been like that nobody can say, but from that day till recently Arabia, though situated between two of the most important highways of commerce between West and East, only 700 or 800 miles apart, has remained outside the scope of the ambitions of various Powers who from time to time have gone forth seeking fields for territorial expansion. She has been left severely alone to develop on her own lines, and, despite her vast area and roving population of warring tribes unamenable to any central authority, she has developed a homogeneous civilisation practically uncontaminated by any outside influences. And within her borders germinated a great religion which has not only established itself to the exclusion of all others on Arabian soil, but has also spread its tentacles over a great part of two continents.

During the first six centuries of the Christian era both Christianity and Judaism exercised an ever-growing influence among tribal communities primevally pagan, but ever becoming more conscious of the shortcomings of their own multiple creeds and of the practical advantages of the monotheistic systems already in their midst. The growing rivalry of the two great empires on their northern frontier—Christian

Rome and Magian Persia—naturally disposed them to judge the merits of the two systems in conflict, and the natural preference was for Rome. At the same time, the themes of chivalry and tribal patriotism, so evident in the poetry of the golden age of Arab literature, tended strongly towards the development of a national spirit on broader than tribal lines in defence of Arabia against the rival would-be suzerains. The result was a new religion, for, while the champions of the old polytheism gathered at their annual councils at Mecca to discuss the defence of their vested privileges against the encroachments of Christianity and the less immediate danger of Roman or Persian political and commercial penetration, a new prophet was at work devising nothing less than a scheme for the religious and political unification of Arabia as a nation capable not only of self-defence, but also of challenging the actual supremacy of its neighbours. That Muhammad owed much to his studies of Judaism and Christianity admits of no question, but the appeal to Arab nationalism was the corner-stone of the new Islam, and it is to that factor that it owed its phenomenal success. The early struggles of the new dispensation for existence against the resistance of the pagan hierarchy, always zealous in defence of its vested interests, forms no part of the theme of this work. A decade sufficed to win the adhesion of all Arabia to the new movement. A century later Islam was the dynamic factor of an empire growing from strength to strength, but by then Arabia had ceased to be its centre. It had already become, as it was to remain for centuries, an unimportant province of the empire it had created; and its people, neglected by the distant central government, tended to relapse into their old pagan ways, with the merest veneer of Islamic formalism to grace them. Christianity and

Judaism (except for a few colonies of Jews in the Yaman) had gone for ever; the old nationalism with its glorious literature was lost in tribal chaos. Arabia had fallen from grace, and for all practical purposes it disappeared from the purview of history until the middle of the eighteenth century, when the story of modern Arabia begins as strangely as any romance, with the stoning of a woman for adultery in the streets of ‘Ayaina, the capital of one of the many petty principalities then contending for the hegemony of the desert. Once more Arabia had produced a prophet, who would henceforth be the pivot of her destinies. Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab was the rock on which would be built in due course the Wahhabi Empire of the early nineteenth century and its greater successor of our own times. His blood, by intermarriage, courses through the veins of Arabia’s ruling dynasty; and his precepts, unaltered, are faithfully practised in every household of the desert. The reactionary fanaticism of his puritanical system paved the way for the ordered progress of a modern state, for he conferred on Arabia the boon of discipline to control the license of her primeval chaos. “Verily God changeth not that which is in a people until they change that which is in themselves.”

Arabia

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ARABIA

CHAPTER I

ARABIA BEFORE MUHAMMAD IBN 'ABDUL WAHHAB

Before proceeding to chronicle the events which constitute the beginning of the Wahhabi movement it is necessary to make a brief survey of conditions in and round the fringes of Arabia during the first half of the eighteenth century. For all practical purposes the interior of the desert-peninsula was unknown to European science or curiosity at this time. Varthema some two centuries earlier had travelled down from Damascus, apparently by way of the Wadi Sirhan, to Mecca and Jidda, whence he had gone round by sea to the Persian Gulf to see Hormuz at the height of its prosperity before the advent of Portuguese imperialism. And about twenty years before the dawn of the eighteenth century one Joseph Pitts of Exeter had also, rather by accident than by design, visited Mecca as a pilgrim in the train of his temporary owner. The accounts eventually published by both these travellers and the writings of the mediæval Arab geographers made up the sum-total of European knowledge of Arabian conditions.

The coasts of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea had, however, begun to be familiar enough to European adventurers and their financial sponsors at home from early in the sixteenth century, when the Portuguese, having discovered the Cape route to India, visited

Hormuz in search of trade openings and stayed there to found an Empire. Thanks to the competition of British rivals for the Gulf trade and their own incompetence, rapacity and brutality, they lost that empire within a century. The British were, however, not left in peace to enjoy their monopoly, for the Dutch soon appeared on the scene; and it would seem that during the latter part of the seventeenth century Dutch affairs prospered, to the growing detriment of British interests. Before the end of the century, however, the tables began to be turned, and the British entered the crucial lap of the eighteenth century with something to spare in the international race for political and economic advantage. The amalgamation of the various commercial companies competing in the eastern trade conferred something of a national character on the reorganised East India Company, and its representatives began to receive tardy official recognition in the shape of appointment to consular status. Even the entry of France upon the scene did not materially affect the general dominance of British interests. On the contrary, the British managed to arrange for the co-operation of French and Dutch in the suppression of the prevalent piracy on terms which secured for themselves a privileged position in the Persian Gulf, while relegating to their allies the less attractive task of policing the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

The Portuguese had in the days of their prosperity failed to establish themselves either at Aden or at any point on the Arabian shore of the Red Sea. The Ottoman Sultans, having secured the prestige of the Califate from the Fatimite dynasty of Egypt soon after the beginning of the sixteenth century, had, however, appeared with a show of force on the coasts of the Hijaz and Yaman. They consolidated their position in both countries not without some difficulty, and by the middle of the century were in more or less effective control at Mecca and in the Yaman Tihama. Their sovereignty was soon afterwards extended to San'a, the capital of the highland domain of the Zaidite Imams, and a Turkish Governor-General was duly installed with supervisory functions over the Hijaz Ashraf. The Turkish hold on the highlands proved to be transitory, and an expedition sent to reduce the Imam to order experienced so much difficulty that the Ottoman Government was content to accept a formal acknowledgment of its suzerainty in return for a guarantee of abstention from any active concern in the administration of the country. Thus a precarious foothold was maintained in the whole coastal tract from Aden northwards to the Hijaz inclusive, and it may well be that the shadow of the Sublime Porte played an important part in discouraging European schemes of encroachment on the Red Sea littoral. The vanity of that shadow was perhaps better appreciated by the peoples whom it served to protect from such attentions; and certain it is that by the middle of the seventeenth century Turkish authority was being openly flouted both in the Yaman and to a less extent in the Hijaz, where the main grievance appeared to be the Ottoman tendency to appoint Turks to some of the high offices which the ruling Sharifs regarded as being subject to their own patronage.

In 1642 the Turks evacuated the Yaman, which was now to enjoy two centuries of independence accompanied by commercial prosperity based on the coffee trade; while in the Hijaz the nominal authority of the Ottoman Turks had by the beginning of the eighteenth century almost disappeared in favour of the rival Barakat and Zaid factions of the Meccan Ashraf, who, while contending with each other for the palm, worked in unison to restore the effective independence of their country.

While the ineffective efforts of Turkish imperialism were thus materially contributing to the growth of two indigenous and independent states on the west, the rivalries of European Powers were tending to produce a comparable result on the other side of the Peninsula along the shores of the Persian Gulf. The Ya'riba dynasty of Yamanite origin had established itself in Oman soon after the beginning of the seventeenth century, and had lost little time in harrying, and finally ousting the last Portuguese outposts on Arabian soil. This success it followed up early in the next century by wresting the islands of Bahrain from Persian rule, while a brief Persian reoccupation of Oman in the vigorous reign of Nadir Shah was terminated by the rise of the dynasty which has ruled Oman or parts of it up to our own times. Thus the curtain rose on the eighteenth century showing Arabs in effective control of the whole Arabian littoral to the exclusion of Turks and Europeans, who for two centuries had nibbled at the exposed edges of a *terra incognita*, whose womb was already in travail with a new idea.

As for the central desert countries, Najd and Hasa and the districts dependent on them, they were at this time sunk deep in the abyss of paganism, "steeped in shame and defiled by the taint of corruption," as is recorded by one of the Arab historians of Wahhabism, the Shaikh Husain ibn Ghannam. Forgetting the pure Islamic doctrine of the Oneness of a jealous God, they had gone a-whoring after minor prophets and saints, living and dead; many believed firmly in the efficacy of prayer to rocks and stones and trees. The process had, of course, been gradual and spread over many centuries, with the result that the Arabs of the early eighteenth century had come traditionally to regard their backsliding as the true faith. What their fathers and their fathers' fathers had practised was good enough for them, and after all God, whether the true God or his modern travesty, was for all practical purposes indifferent to the woe or weal of his creatures, and life was very hard in the desert.

So at Jubaila in Wadi Hanifa, the scene of a great battle between the Companions of the Prophet and the old heathens in the early days of Islam, the practice had grown up of visiting the grave of Zaid ibn al Khattab, whose eloquence was held capable of adjusting the tribulations of his admirers. Similarly at Dar'iya, destined to be the scene of a new awakening, a tomb reputed to contain certain Companions was a favourite resort of those with worldly ends to serve. Wadi Ghubaira, near by, with its reputed tomb of Dharrar ibn al Azwar, was another scene of visitation, and at Bulaidat al Fida there grew a palm tree familiarly known as the "Stallion," to which young men and maidens resorted to indulge in shocking practices acceptable to the tree-God. And women, too, would come to it clamouring for husbands as they clasped the horrid trunk to their bosoms in an agony of hope deferred. Rags were attached to tamarisk trees at the birth of a male child in the belief that such a proceeding would save it alive. And finally, at the extremity of Dar'iya there was a cave believed to have been created by God especially for a woman known as the Amir's daughter, who had shrieked for help under threat of outrage by some low fellows; the rock had split to receive her in a secure dungeon, and the superstitious tribes-folk made a practice of taking meat and bread to deposit in the cave.

Sufficient instances have been given to illustrate the depths of moral degradation to which the people of

Central Arabia had sunk within a thousand years of their rescue from a similar state by the call of Islam. When writing or speaking of "The Ignorance," Wahhabis generally refer to this period before the mission of Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab rather than to the heyday of Arab chivalry to which that label was attached by the early Islamic writers. And the essential difference between the two periods is that, while before Islam the Arabs had a primitive though well-organised civilisation, with a literature of outstanding merit, the decadence of Arabian Islam was, or appears to have been, accompanied by unrelieved moral and intellectual stagnation.

In these circumstances we find in the political sphere very much the state of affairs that we would naturally expect. With the decay of the Carmathian movement towards the end of the tenth century Arabia virtually disappeared from history, and it must be assumed that the nomad movements which ultimately gave rise to the modern tribal distribution of the interior proceeded unchecked through the succeeding centuries. War and disturbance would be the natural accompaniments of such movements, and there appears to be very little doubt that war and disturbance constituted the history of Central Arabia during this time. Through the dim mists we seem to get glimpses of one tribe, not perhaps more powerful, but apparently enjoying a prestige greater than the rest. The ‘Anaza, emanating from the Yaman highlands and moving north in search of pastures, have left their traces at every stage of their long and laborious journey. To-day they are normally regarded as the premier tribe of Northern Arabia impinging on the confines of Syria and ‘Iraq; but ‘Anaza elements are to be found in almost every part of the peninsula, and their political pre-eminence about three centuries ago may be justly inferred from the fact that three of the ruling dynasties of to-day claim ‘Anaza origin.

It is probable that towards the end of the seventeenth century the Taiy tribe of Northern Najd or modern Jabal Shammar and the Bani Khalid tribe of the Hasa had begun to feel the pressure of the new invaders, who had founded a petty barony at Dar‘iya in close proximity to the Tamim principality of ‘Ayaina, which seems to have owed a loose allegiance to the Bani Khalid dynasty then ruling the Hasa. South of Dar’iya lay another petty principality in Manfuha, under the rule of a certain Dawwas, also of Tamim stock, and apparently subject to the Hasa. And doubtless there were other petty states which history and legend have neglected in favour of those who fought out the final rounds of the struggle for Arabian hegemony.

CHAPTER II

MUHAMMAD IBN 'ABDUL WAHHAB AND MUHAMMAD IBN SA'UD

It was at 'Ayaina that the founder of the Wahhabi movement was born in A.D. 1703, his father being 'Abdul Wahhab ibn Sulaiman of the Masharifa clan, whose ancestry coalesces with that of the Prophet Muhammad in the first century of the Christian era. The family was of Tamim stock, and therefore of great antiquity as settlers in Najd. 'Abdul Wahhab would seem to have been a man of some learning, as it is on record that he initiated his son into the mysteries of Hanbali jurisprudence. The son's feat of having committed the whole Quran to heart by the time he had reached the age of ten was also doubtless attributable to the parental example; and it was probably by his father's wish that he married at the early age of twelve. Having thus prematurely settled down, Muhammad was moved to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, after which he tarried some months at Madina before returning home. A studious disposition had now developed itself in him, and we hear of frequent visits both to the Hijaz and to Basra for the purpose of imbibing knowledge from the divines in both places. He is reputed to have extended his wanderings to Baghdad and even to Damascus, but there appears to be no record of a visit by him to Egypt. The Hasa was at the time another seat of learning which he did not neglect, and he seems to have owed much of his inspiration to Shaikh 'Abdullah ibn Ibrahim al Najdi, afterwards called al Madani from his election of the

Prophet’s city as the centre of his teaching. The only other intimate fact recorded of him is that he had a brother named Sulaiman, while he himself had numerous offspring who handed on both his tradition and his blood to our own times. And as has already been noted, the royal family which he inspired to greatness has not disdained to ally itself by marriage with his house.

In or about the year 1744 Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab appears to have returned to ‘Ayaina and to have started his campaign against the prevalent laxity of his fellows. Islam was still, nominally at least, the established faith of the country, and the right of the learned to propound its principles was conceded philosophically enough by circles who had long tempered their dogmatic severity with the breezy hedonism of pure materialism. Moreover, it must be remembered that an undercurrent of fanaticism is always endemic in desert conditions of life, which impose on an indigent pastoral population a certain degree of unavoidable asceticism; this asceticism was even recognised as a virtue when kept within reasonable limits and practised by the proper people. Thus it is probable that Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab was listened to with considerable indulgence and allowed the full freedom of speech characteristic of desert peoples. The rub came when the admitted cogency of his logic was confronted by a very human unwillingness to apply it too literally to the daily life of the people.

A test case arose at an early stage and proved, in fact, to be the small cloud no bigger than a man’s hand presaging the storm to come. Would the preacher push his precepts to their logical conclusion if confronted with a crime for which the punishment provided by the code he preached was admittedly and ludicrously savage? The critics did not perhaps consider the very practical question of the object of punishment, which under the Islamic system aimed at imposing a certain degree of discipline on an unruly community in order that that community might be guided to the achievement of a great national purpose definitely envisaged by the Prophet. Be that as it may, their materialistic outlook was destined to receive a terrible shock at the hands of the reformer who had achieved a perfectly definite attitude towards the problem involved. If God (and the Quran was the word of God Himself) had prescribed a certain punishment for a certain crime, who was man to gainsay His wisdom? The punishment for such contumacy was too appalling to face with equanimity. To burn for ever oneself was undoubtedly worse than to condemn another to death for a venial offence.

It almost looks as if the test case posed for the judgment of the new Prophet was deliberately staged for his exposure and undoing. Sexual laxity was a commonplace of the Arab life of the day, while the Quranic penalty for such laxity was death. Contemporary England, without any such divine sanction, treated sheep-stealing and other trivial offences as deserving of the same severity. But, while the landed gentry of England were perfectly prepared to vindicate the sanctity of their property by exacting the utmost rigour of their own laws, would the Arabian preacher be as pressing in the vindication of God's prerogatives? To appreciate the verdict of Arabian posterity on the manner in which the Wahhabi reformer faced his ordeal we must have the story as nearly as possible in the words of the Arab historian.

"In those days there occurred an incident which shocked the feelings of the ignorant populace who had gleaned no knowledge of the divine law. A woman of 'Ayaina committed adultery and admitted the crime. She repeated her admission four separate times, and the Shaikh (namely Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab) was acquainted of her case. Again she admitted her guilt, and repeated the admission again and again. He inquired of the state of her mind, and was assured of her sanity and health. He deferred the case for a few days in the hope that she might revoke her confession and deny the crime. But she clung obstinately to her admission, and at length, when she had persisted in her confession on four separate consecutive days, the Shaikh (God have mercy upon him) instructed the Governor to execute her by stoning, for that she had sinned, and by her admission thereof had published her offence abroad. The Shaikh then ordered that she should be enveloped in her clothes and stoned with pebbles according to the law. So the Governor, 'Uthman, went forth with a party of the Muslims and stoned her until she died; and the first to cast a stone at her was the said Governor, 'Uthman. Thereafter the Shaikh ordered that she should be washed and shrouded and prayed over."

This "laudable incident," unprecedented in the memory of men, created consternation in the ranks of the backsliders, and when the preacher defended his action by argument, they resorted to cunning and deceit. They found a ready hearing at the court of one who appears to have been the suzerain of 'Ayaina, Sulaiman al Muhammad, chief of the Bani Khalid tribe and Prince of the Hasa. This man is represented as a powerful tyrant wallowing in adultery without concealment, and generally notorious for his excesses. To him they declared that the preacher of 'Ayaina was aiming at nothing less than the usurpation of his throne and the appropriation of the taxes which maintained him and his Court. He issued peremptory instructions to the Governor, ‘Uthman, to encompass the upstart's death or banishment from the country, and he accompanied these orders with an unmistakable hint that if he failed in the matter it would fare ill with him.

Thus worldly considerations triumphed over spiritual, and ‘Uthman, unable to reconcile the death of the preacher with his conscience, reluctantly ordered him to leave ‘Ayaina. Muhammad fared to the town of Dar‘iya, half a day's journey down the Hanifa valley, and found temporary hospitality for a day and a night in the house of ‘Abdullah ibn Suwailim, whence he moved to that of a pupil of his named Shaikh Ahmad ibn Suwailim, where he was immediately visited in person by the courtly baron of Dar‘iya, the Amir Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud, accompanied by his brothers, Mishari and Thunaian. The object of this visit was to offer the newcomer the hospitality of the Court, and to pray him to bind himself by the most solemn vows never to think of departure.

In the days of his "ignorance"—that is to say, before the advent of the Wahhabi preacher—Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud had already established a reputation for courtesy and honourable dealings with all men. And the Shaikh, having acceded to his request to make his home at Dar‘iya, lost no time in initiating the campaign of reform to which he had devoted himself. With the Prince's powerful support he soon made important converts to the cause, and it is perhaps worth while placing on record the names of the earliest adherents of a movement which was destined to change the history of Arabia. First and foremost were the Prince's brothers already mentioned and Farhan ibn Sa‘ud, another brother, while among the priestly confraternity were Shaikh Ahmad ibn

Suwailim and Shaikh 'Isa ibn Qasim; and among the leaders of the lay community were Muhammad al Huzaimi, 'Abdullah ibn Dughaithir, Sulaiman al Wushaiqiri and the brothers Hamad and Muhammad, sons of Husain. These were the first doughty champions of Wahhabism, whose names are held in high honour to this day and whose descendants grace the Court of the Wahhabi monarch of our times.

The fame of such preaching soon went abroad into the surrounding country, and would-be converts to the new religion came flocking to Dar'iya. Among them came scions of the Mu'ammar ruling family of 'Ayaina itself, whose experiences convinced 'Uthman, the ruling chief whom we have already met in connection with the stoning incident, that the new movement had the blessing of God. So he came to Dar'iya to beg the preacher to return to his own home, but Muhammad ibn Sa'ud refused his consent to any such proposition, and the disappointed ruler of 'Ayaina retraced his steps in high dudgeon, meditating war on his neighbour. Meanwhile the attention of the prince and priest of Dar'iya was drawn to the Manfuha-Riyadh oasis to the south of their capital, where Dahham ibn Dawwas, the Governor of Riyadh, was instituting a campaign of persecution against the rapidly-increasing local adherents of the Wahhabi cause. On the death of Dawwas, who had ruled over Manfuha with irresponsible tyranny, his son and successor, Muhammad, had been slain by the people of the town, led by his cousin, named Zamil ibn Faris, and the whole of Dawwas' family, including Dahham, had fled for safety to Riyadh, where one Zaid ibn Musa aba Zar' was Governor. The latter was murdered by a half-wit relative, and the murderer was at once dispatched by a slave of the household, Khumaiyis by name, who made himself ruler of the town nominally as regent for the minor sons of Zaid. Three years later, fearing reprisals by the victims of various acts of his, Khumaiyis fled to Hair, and eventually returned to Manfuha, where he was in due course murdered. Now Dahham had been in the service of this Khumaiyis during his regency at Riyadh, and, finding the town temporarily without any government, he now seized the reins of power himself on the pretext of holding them in trust for Zaid's son, whom he declared to be his own nephew. His subsequent treatment and banishment of the boy raised a party against him at Riyadh, who besieged him in the fort until, in response to his appeal, Muhammad ibn Sa'ud sent his brother, Mishari, with an army to restore order. Dahham, however, continued in his old methods of tyranny, of which some gruesome details are preserved by the Arab historians; but he was now called upon to embrace the new religion, and a state of war resulted on his contemptuous refusal of the invitation. Manfuha, which had embraced the new creed, was attacked and taken by surprise, but was gallantly recovered by its people, Dahham being twice wounded and a number of his followers killed. An indecisive attack by the Wahhabi forces on Riyadh was followed by a counter-attack on 'Ammariya, on returning from which Dahham's force came into contact with a relieving force sent out from Dar'iya. Again there seems to have been no definite result, and the combatants separated with small losses on either side.

By this time it appears that 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammar, the Governor of 'Ayaina, had joined the Wahhabi chief, for we find the two joining hands in an attack on Riyadh, where, at the skirmish known as the "battle of the greybeards," a sortie of the besieged was driven back with considerable loss, including that of certain old men of a well-known family of the town. The "battle of the slaves" provided another ineffective victory for Ibn Sa'ud, but Dahham soon carried the war into the enemy's country, where the Wahhabi forces lost two of its leaders in Faisal and Sa'ud, sons of the Prince Muhammad. This was in the year 1747.

Further support for the new cause was forthcoming the following year, when a joint force representing Dar'iya, 'Ayaina, Manfuha and Huraimala marched on Riyadh, and actually succeeded in penetrating into the city and reaching the gate of the fort. Here Dahham was getting the worst of a single combat with one Hamad ibn Muhammad ibn Manis when Musa ibn 'Isa ibn Haris saved him by attacking his adversary from behind. Subsequently Musa declared his attraction to the new Islam to his master, who promptly cut off his hands and feet and banished him to Dar'iya, where he died soon after his arrival. The Governor of 'Ayaina had for some reason abstained from this expedition, and now attempted to seduce the Huraimala contingent, as it returned homeward through his state, from its allegiance to Ibn Sa'ud; and, furthermore, he even entered into a treasonable correspondence with Dahham through the Governor of Tharmida, with the result that the three foregathered in conference at 'Ayaina in the hope of inducing Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab to join them on the pretext that Dahham wished to embrace the new creed and make peace. The failure of this manœuvre and the flight of Dahham in view of the hostile attitude of the people of 'Ayaina forced 'Uthman to sue for forgiveness at the Wahhabi Court, with which in the following year we find him again co-operating in an attack on Riyadh, which was no more successful than its predecessors. The same year saw Muhammad ibn Sa'ud's son ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, destined to great fame as a warrior in the years to come, taking part under ‘Uthman’s leadership in a similar expedition to Riyadh and in another to Tharmida, where, after a signal defeat of a sortie by the defenders, the young Prince and the commander quarrelled violently over the former’s proposal to occupy the town before the people, who had taken refuge in the fort, had time to rally. ‘Abdul ‘Aziz publicly upbraided ‘Uthman for his refusal to co-operate in this scheme, and the latter withdrew with his forces to ‘Ayaina, leaving the Prince with too small a following to effect an entry. Raids on Tharmida and Thadiq were the main activities of the Wahhabis during the rest of the year, while the next year Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud himself headed an attack on Riyadh.

In 1750 an event of considerable importance took place. The treachery of ‘Uthman was becoming notorious among the supporters of the Wahhabis, and when he made advances to Ibn Suwait, chief of the Dhafir tribe, and again to the Amir of Tharmida, the time was ripe for drastic action to put an end once for all to his constant intriguing. The result was his murder by his own fellow-citizens at the instigation of Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab himself, who immediately repaired to ‘Ayaina to arrange for its future administration as a dependency of the Wahhabi state. Disregarding the special request of the people, he appointed Mishari ibn Mu‘ammar, of the murdered man’s family, as Governor over them, and returned to Dar‘iya to advise the Prince in regard to the campaigns which followed with tedious monotony and without any striking result against Riyadh, Tharmida and other places still faithful to the infidels.

In 1751 Zilfi was successfully raided, and the apostasy of the Amir of Dharma was followed by his murder and the appointment of another Governor by Ibn Sa'ud. A year later the village of Raghba, at the edge of Tuwaiq, which had adhered to the Wahhabi movement, was attacked and looted by the forces of the Sudair and Washm provinces reinforced by the Dhafir; while a combined infidel force also marched against Dharma, which threw it back with heavy loss. A Wahhabi attack on Dilam was followed by a battle at Hair, from which the pursuing Dilamites fled before the onslaught of their foes, who had sworn to win or die where they stood. And so the rather dreary story of petty skirmishes goes on for year after year, with the Wahhabi cause making slow progress against the stream of paganism, whose chief protagonist was Dahham of Riyadh. The struggle seemed almost won when this redoubtable enemy in 1754 sued for peace and welcomed a Wahhabi mission at his capital, but the respite proved to be short-lived, as we find him again in the field a year later in league with the provinces of Sudair and Washm for an attack on Huraimala, which had been taken by storm by 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Sa'ud shortly before, and incidentally treated to a long written sermon by Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, setting forth in considerable detail the principles on which he had based his missionary enterprise. The capture of Huraimala had produced a marked effect on the countryside, and we find the important towns of Shaqra and Quai'iya tendering their submission. On the other hand, Manfuha had recanted and gone over to the enemy in 1757, and a severe defeat by the Wahhabi forces in his own palm-groves did not deter Dahham from an offensive against Shaqra, where his forces were besieged in the neighbouring village of Qarayin and only saved from capture by the timely arrival of Ibn Suwait and his still pagan Dhafir tribesmen.

Attacks on Wushaiqir and Jalajil towards the end of the year were followed by alarms and excursions in 1758, resulting in the adhesion of Thadiq, Hauta and Janubiya in the Sudair province to the Wahhabi cause. The desultory skirmishing round Riyadh continued unabated without any appreciable result, while Mubairik ibn ‘Adwan, the Governor of Huraimala, took advantage of the preoccupation of ‘Abdul ‘Aziz in that direction to recant his allegiance. He was, however, rapidly crushed and deposed from office, and his attempt with the assistance of contingents from Sudair, Washm and Majma‘a to seize the town ended in failure. But the outstanding feature of this year was the arrival at Dar‘iya of disturbing tidings which made Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud take serious thought for the strengthening of the fortifications of his capital and of other towns likely to have to face the coming storm. The progress of the Wahhabi cause had not passed unremarked by the Prince of the Hasa, ‘Arai‘ar by name, who was now reported to have declared his intention of stamping out a militant heresy of so dangerous a character. And in this plan he could count on the assistance and sympathy of a great part of Najd itself.

‘Abdul ‘Aziz, now fully established in the chief command of his father's forces, threw himself vigorously into the task of strengthening the Wahhabi capital with a double wall dotted with bastions. And he was thus ready when, in 1759, ‘Arai‘ar marched on Najd with the whole fighting strength of the Bani Khalid tribe and the Hasa towns, to be reinforced as he advanced by contingents from Sudair, Washm, Kharj, Mahmal and Riyadh. Mubairik ibn ‘Adwan, the deposed Governor of Huraimala, launched the first attack on that town, but failed to make any impression on the defenders in spite of Bani

Khalid reinforcements sent up by ‘Arai‘ar. Checked in this effort, the enemy turned against Jubaila, but again retired after a vain attempt to carry the place by storm. Shortly after, the province of Mahmal made its submission to Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud, while the town of Qasab, attacked by ‘Abdul Aziz, also surrendered. No fewer than twenty-five campaigns were waged by ‘Abdul ‘Aziz during the next five years, in the course of which his tireless energy gradually wore down the opposition to the new movement in the provinces of Central Najd, which, however, seemed as far as ever from anything like enthusiastic acceptance of Wahhabi principles. From Zilfi in the north to Dilam and Na‘jan in the southern province of Kharj his armies marched and countermarched unceasingly, and the initiative of attack seems to have passed entirely into his hands, as we hear little of attacks on the Wahhabis by the enemy with the exception of one expedition against Dar‘iya by Dahham and occasional acts of apostasy by towns weary of the new fanaticism. The Dhafir and Subai‘ tribes were severely dealt with for acts of rebellion, and the Governor of ‘Ayaina, Mishari ibn Mu‘ammar, was deposed in favour of a cousin, Sultan ibn Muhaisin, who was installed by the Shaikh in person after the demolition of the Mu‘ammar Princes' fortress-palace in the town. In 1763 a visitation of locusts caused widespread damage to the crops of the whole country, and in the following year ‘Abdul ‘Aziz felt himself strong enough to challenge ‘Arai‘ar, Prince of Hasa, in his own country. Hufuf and Mubarraz were attacked, and the whole province was raided in search of loot, but the Wahhabis in due course drew off and returned to their own country, leaving the final settlement to a future occasion. This incident seems to have decided Dahham that the continuance of his struggle with Dar'iya offered no chance of ultimate success, and in 1764 he wrote to Ibn Sa'ud stating his desire to accept the new religion and swearing faithful allegiance. His submission was accepted on the condition of his payment of a substantial cash indemnity and of his restoring their property to those whom he had evicted from Riyadh on account of their religious views. Thus did Dahham, after many years of opposition, enter into the Wahhabi fold, and next year we find him accompanying 'Abdul 'Aziz on a punitive expedition against the Dhafir encamped at Jarrab.

The same year, however, the Wahhabi cause suffered a reverse of fortune at Hair. A raiding party from the tribes of Najran, on the borders of Yaman, had come up into Washm and attacked an encampment of the Subai', at whose appeal for assistance 'Abdul 'Aziz had followed up the raiders to the plain of Qidhla and practically annihilated them. The few who escaped to tell the tale in far Najran roused the local chief to immediate action, and an expedition was organised to avenge the losses incurred. A large army in due course arrived in the lower reaches of Wadi Hanifa, and occupied Hair, whither 'Abdul 'Aziz hastened to encounter it. The battle which followed resulted in a crushing defeat of the Wahhabis, who lost many hundreds of prisoners, while the unstable Dahham could not resist the temptation to make overtures to the enemy and even to acquaint 'Arai'ar with the new and favourable development of the situation. The latter wrote to Hasan, the Najran chief, begging him to stand his ground until he himself could come up with an army to press home the advantage thus gained. But the Prince of Hasa had only reached the great sand-barrier of the Dahna on his way when he heard that the Yamanite forces had melted away to their homes rather than face a long and perhaps dangerous sojourn in the enemy's country, which they had no particular desire to conquer. Undaunted by this disappointment, 'Arai'ar marched on to Dar'iya, which he proceeded to batter with his artillery—an arm which had apparently never before been used in Central Arabian warfare. It does not appear that the guns of the besiegers were very effective in creating the breaches necessary for the waiting storming-parties, but the struggle went on with desperate grimness on both sides, until the component elements of the besieging army began to weary of the business in spite of the exhortations of Dahham. Every effort to achieve a footing in the Wadi Hanifa was defeated by vigorous sorties on the part of the Wahhabis, who fought with the utmost bravery in the firm belief that God was with them and had neutralised the dreaded guns of the enemy for their express benefit. Moreover, they were supported by the conviction that death in the defence of the true religion against the foes of God would immediately be rewarded by translation to Paradise. It was in the end probably the lack of water rather than anything else that forced 'Arai'ar to raise the siege, whose failure had done much to minimise the shock to the country of the Wahhabi defeat at Hair.

Dahham once more sued for peace, which was granted; but again in the following year he resumed his hostilities against Manfuha, and the fat was once more in the fire. His ultimate fall was now only a question of time, but 'Abdul 'Aziz's preparations for another offensive against the traitor were interrupted by the death of the Amir Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, full of years and honour, in the year 1765. He had left to his son the active direction of the militant part of the enterprise, to which he had set his hand by the welcome accorded to the Wahhabi preacher over twenty years before; and he is thus entitled to fame as the actual founder of the Wahhabi State, though his personality appears to have left no very deep impression on the annals of his country, which are full of the alarums and excursions of his firstborn, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, who now succeeded him, and was destined to build up an empire only less great than that which came into being during the first quarter of the twentieth century under his descendant and namesake, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz II, the present King of the Hijaz and Najd and its Dependencies.

After the ceremonies attendant upon his public acclamation as ruler of Dar‘iya, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz attacked Riyadh, where Dahham was saved by the advent of the Subai‘. A minor expedition was then conducted into Sudair by ‘Abdullah, a younger son of the late ruler, who ended up with a successful raid against the Subai‘ in the ‘Arma tract. And another expedition to Riyadh resulted in the defeat of the Wahhabis, while further skirmishes took place round Manfuha, and the year ended with an unprecedentedly heavy hailstorm, which did great damage to crops and pastures, causing much distress throughout Najd during the following year owing to the famine prices of all foodstuffs. In this year Sa‘ud, the son of ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, is recorded as having taken part in his first campaign against ‘Auda in Sudair, and his father married the daughter of Zamil, the Governor of Manfuha. Scarcity and high prices continued through the year 1769, when Sa‘ud for the first time took command of an expedition against Zilfi, while his father attacked and routed the Subai‘ near Hair. This was followed by an expedition under Sa‘ud against ‘Anaiza, the capital of the Qasim province, which thus makes its first appearance in Wahhabi history. After a valiant resistance to the enemy in the open, the townsfolk retired behind their walls, and the Wahhabis withdrew to Dar'iya. But in the following year, after a successful Wahhabi attack on Hilaliya, the whole province made submission to 'Abdul 'Aziz, who, in accordance with his usual practice, appointed preachers and teachers to direct the steps of his new subjects in the right way before withdrawing homeward. Soon after, as the result of a desert encounter with Sharif Mansur, who was apparently on a raiding expedition from the Hijaz, an arrangement was made under which a large party of Wahhabis immediately made a pilgrimage to Mecca, where they were welcomed and nobly entertained by the Grand Sharif, Ahmad ibn Sa'id, at whose request the Shaikh and the Amir deputed Shaikh 'Abdul 'Aziz al Hasin to explain the principles of the new movement in Najd to the learned men of Mecca. With him went gifts for the Sharif's acceptance and a lengthy epistle penned with great care by Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab himself for the edification of the ruler of the Holy Cities of Islam.

The prelates selected to confer with the Wahhabi envoy were Yahya ibn Salih the Hanafite, 'Abdul Wahhab ibn Hasan, a Turk who was the Ottoman Sultan's *Mufti*, and 'Abdul Ghani ibn Hilal; and the questions selected for discussion were three in number, with a strangely familiar ring in modern ears: the test of heresy; the demolition of domes surmounting tombs; and the rejection of the saints as interceders with God. The discussion as recorded seems to have been confined to a series of short and dogmatic statements by the visiting prelate and their immediate acceptance by his hearers, with the result that he returned to Najd much impressed by the cordiality of his welcome and the good sense of the Meccan ecclesiastics. In view of the controversy which these principles were destined to arouse in modern times, it is worth while recording the statements made by the Wahhabi representative. "The imputation of heresy," he said, "to us (the Wahhabis) is a subterfuge and a calumny against us; while the destruction of domes is an act of piety and virtue, as is recorded by other writers and not challenged or questioned by the learned; and the learned Imams (*i.e.* the Imams of the four orthodox schools of Sunni Islam) have given their verdict on recourse to the saints for the purpose of intercession, and have condemned those who do so as guilty of infidelity, and no one maintains that it is right except ignorant infidels." The Hanbali books were produced and examined, and found to justify the opinions advanced, and the discussion was at an end amid mutual congratulations.

During this same year the continuation of desultory hostilities with Dahham resulted in the death of two of his sons, Dawwas and Sa'dun, in a skirmish near 'Arqa, the first-named being actually slain by the Amir 'Abdul 'Aziz himself, while the latter's brother, 'Ali, fell in battle outside the walls of Riyadh very soon afterwards. But the campaign in which 'Ali fell was destined to be the climax of Dahham's long career of opposition to the Sa'ud dynasty. His mind seems to have become unhinged by his domestic losses and sleep deserted him, or, when it came from utter physical exhaustion, brought frightful dreams of his two sons sacrificed in a war against the Almighty. For thirty years he had resisted the growing power of the rival Wahhabi State, with varying fortune, but now found himself hemmed into his own town of Riyadh by an enemy becoming ever more aggressive as time went on. He could not have been very old at this time, but doubtless his strenuous exertions had worn him out, while his own subjects were becoming dissatisfied with the constant and resultless warfare. He felt himself at the end of his tether, and so it was that on one occasion, towards the end of 1773, when ‘Abdul ‘Aziz had set out once more for an attack on Riyadh, he was met at ‘Arqa by messengers bringing news of Dahham's abdication and flight, with a small following and such personal property as he could carry, to Dilam. At last the grim struggle was over, and for practical purposes the whole of Najd from the Qasim in the north to Kharj in the south was under Wahhabi rule. Not forgetting to give thanks to God, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz hastened to Riyadh, where he proceeded to make provision for the governance of the city under the new régime. Those who had supported Dahham were freely pardoned, and even those who had deemed it wise to flee with him were invited to return, with an assurance that they would not be called to account for their past deeds. The houses and palm-groves and other property of Dahham and his family were confiscated for the benefit of the royal treasury; and teachers were appointed to bring the population of Riyadh into the true faith.

‘Abdul ‘Aziz was now free for the greater work which awaited him, and which must be reserved for another chapter, before entering upon which it may be well to make a rapid survey of the state of affairs obtaining in the neighbouring countries to which he would be turning his attention during the next quarter of a century. ‘Arai‘ar of the Bani Khalid dynasty still ruled unchallenged in the Hasa and dominated the whole of north-eastern Arabia along the shore of the Persian Gulf, where a colony of the ‘Atabi section of ‘Anaza had recently founded the settlement of Kuwait, destined to become an important trade centre and an independent state, though at this time the new settlers were on good terms and even in matrimonial alliance with the Hasa dynasty. Basra and Baghdad were under Turkish rule, though Persia lost no opportunity of challenging Turkish authority in the former port, which had become the chief seat of British commercial enterprise in the Gulf, in spite of a temporary transfer to Bushire on account of a terrible visitation of plague which decimated the population of Mesopotamia in 1773. Two years later the Gulf was to be visited for the first time by a British naval vessel, while the Dutch had already abandoned their struggle to maintain a commercial footing on its shores. Piracy was rife, and the notorious Qawasimi pirates of the Oman coast had raided and captured various places on the Persian coast, but it was not till later that they reached the zenith of their power and attracted the attention of the British Government. Persia had captured the Islands of Bahrain from the Hawala Arabs in 1753, and would rule them for another decade from the point at which we have now arrived. And, finally, the important province of Oman was under the rule of the Ghaffari dynasty, whose founder, Ahmad ibn Sa'id, had put an end to the Persian occupation of this territory in 1759.

On the other side of Arabia the most important event of the period contemporary with the unification of Najd under Wahhabi rule was the visit of a Danish scientific mission under Carsten Niebuhr to Jidda and the Yaman in 1762 and the following year. Niebuhr, who was the pioneer of Arabian exploration in the modern sense, on his return to Europe in 1764 published an admirable account of the Yaman and other parts of the country visited by him; and incidentally he was the first to convey to Europe the news of the rapid rise and progress of the Wahhabi movement, of which he appears to have gleaned much knowledge at various places on the Persian Gulf coast where he touched during the latter part of his journey. At this time it seems that the Amir Muhammad was already being talked of as a possible ruler of all Arabia, and Niebuhr's concise estimate of the situation in inner Arabia at the time was almost prophetic in its exactness. In the Yaman he found an independent state, long free of Turkish control or interference, enjoying a considerable measure of agricultural and commercial prosperity, thanks to the coffee-plants which flourished in its highlands. The country does not appear to have yet developed the fanaticism which under the Turkish régime of later days was to make it so difficult of access to Europeans, and in general we get a picture of a delightful community conducting its own affairs in peace and amity with the outer world, where lay the markets for its chief product. The departure of the Turks from the Yaman had greatly weakened their position in the Hijaz, though, as we have already seen, the Ottoman Sultan was represented there by a Mufti at the time when the Grand Sharif Ahmad received the Wahhabi delegate to discuss the principles of the new creed of Najd. The Turkish position appears, however, to have been merely nominal, and the executive government of the Holy Cities vested in the Grand Sharif, who may have paid lip-service to the Calif of Islam but did not allow that fact to interfere with his sovereign discretion to make war on his neighbours as he thought fit for the advancement of his own interests, territorial and financial. At any rate, Ahmad's succcessor in the Grand Sharifate, Sharif Surur, and the latter's successor, Ghalib, are found extending their influence over the 'Asir province and even raiding as far afield as the Qasim, in apparent disregard of the fact that the latter province had already made submission to the Wahhabi cause. They thus laid up a rod in pickle for themselves, anticipating by a century and a half the similar conduct of their descendants and successors of the twentieth century. Of the northern districts of Najd, namely Jabal Shammar and Jauf, we hear nothing in the records of the period under review; they had not yet provoked the intervention of the Wahhabi, and we may suppose that at this time the tribal communities inhabiting these territories by reason of their trading relations with Baghdad and Damascus recognised a vague allegiance to the Ottoman Empire, and served it vicariously and profitably by providing escorts for the pilgrim-caravans, which still, as in the days of the Baghdad Califs, passed through Faid or Hail on their way to and from the Holy Cities.

CHAPTER III

WAHHABI IMPERIALISM: ‘ABDUL ‘AZIZ IBN SA‘UD

With the fall of Riyadh the Wahhabi cause was definitely in the ascendant in Central Arabia, but ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was far from being at the end of his troubles. The new faith, imposed by force on the scattered oasis settlements of Najd weary of their constant exposure to danger, made but little appeal to its new votaries; and the Shaikh found it necessary, in sending his congratulations to the victorious Amir at Dahham’s old capital, to remind him in writing of his obligation to rest not until the yoke of the new creed was firmly fixed on the stubborn necks of the Arabs. Zaid ibn Zamil, Governor of Dilam, had made formal submission to Dar‘iya with mental reservations as to his attitude towards the State religion; but ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was now moved to summon him to categorical acceptance of the Wahhabi principles. Zaid wrote hastily to the chief of Najran imploring his succour in his new distress, but Hasan ibn Hibbatallah was disposed to drive a hard bargain, and sent a deputation to demand a substantial cash subsidy in return for the help he could give. His conditions were accepted and the money was collected with much difficulty from the people of Kharj; but it was not until 1776 that Hasan came up into Najd with a large army of his Yamanites, reinforced on the march by sundry Badawin elements, ready then, as always, to throw in their lot with any leader whose object was loot. Meanwhile in 1775 ‘Arai‘ar had marched on Buraida, where, having induced the Wahhabi Governor, ‘Abdullah ibn Hasan, to come out on the pretext of negotiations, he seized his person and launched his army at the unsuspecting town. The fort was captured by Rashid al Duraibi, who was forthwith appointed Governor of the town, and the loyal citizens having fled with the remnants of the ‘Alaiyan family, to which the Wahhabi Governor belonged, ‘Arai‘ar departed for the Hasa, taking his prisoner with him. On the way, however, he appears to have fallen ill and died, being succeeded on the throne of Hasa by his son, Butaiyin. Relieved thus by the intervention of Providence, and leaving Buraida to be dealt with later, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz despatched Sa‘ud on an expedition against Dilam, which was actually entered after the defeat of a vigorous sortie by the defenders. The fort, however, held out, and Sa‘ud withdrew to Hair, whence he launched a sudden raid on distant Zilfi. A profitless victory here encouraged the people of Sudair to pay a visit to Dar‘iya, where they solemnly subscribed to the new religion, subject to the curious condition that they should be exempt for two years from the obligation of *Jihad*, in order that they might have time to recuperate their resources, seriously affected by the preceding years of strife. The southern province of Hariq also made submission at this time.

In 1776 serious operations were begun against Kharj, and ‘Abdul ‘Aziz himself assumed their direction. Dhab‘iya and Dilam were attacked and large areas of their palm-groves were utterly destroyed, while much booty was collected, the whole of which was made over, with the consent of the army, to the ‘Alaiyan family, which had lost its all at Buraida. These operations were but the prelude to more serious warfare, beginning with the arrival of the Najran forces in Najd territory. Their chief, Hasan, having received welcome assistance from the new ruler of the Hasa in the shape of men and provisions, took up a position near Hair, whence he proceeded to raid the countryside. ʻAbdul ʻAziz threw a force into Riyadh for its greater security, and sent Saʻud to harry the Yamani forces round Dharma. Meanwhile Hair had surrendered on terms, and Hasan hastened to Dharma to meet Saʻud. A fierce battle ensued amid the groves of the oasis after the invaders had failed to make any impression on the walls of the town. In it Saʻud gained a decisive victory, resulting in the retirement of the enemy, whose leader was struck down by disease, to which he succumbed during the long and arduous journey to Najran.

The disappearance of Hasan ibn Hibbatallah so soon after the death of ʻAraiʻar and the collapse of Dahham infused fresh vigour into the counsels of the Wahhabis, who had recently suffered a severe loss by the death of Mishari ibn Saʻud, one of the first adherents of the movement. No time was now lost in preparing an expedition against Buraida, and Saʻud, taking with him the ex-Governor ʻAbdullah ibn Hasan and the rest of the ʻAlaiyan family, soon appeared before its walls. The Governor, Rashid al Duraibi, refused to be tempted into the open, and Saʻud, having constructed a fort to dominate the town, left ʻAbdullah ibn Hasan to continue the siege, while he himself returned home. Daily raids gradually wore down the resistance of the garrison, and Duraibi, finding himself in a hopeless position, offered to surrender under guarantee of his own immunity. ʻAbdullah thus reassumed the governorship of Buraida, and the whole of the Qasim hastened to renew its assurance of loyalty to the Wahhabi Amir. Each town was allowed to retain its existing Governor, but ʻAbdullah ibn Hasan was appointed supreme Governor of the whole province on behalf of the central authority.

Butaiyin ibn ‘Arai‘ar had hastened up from the Hasa to relieve the pressure on Buraida, but had arrived too late, and while at Nabqiya, amid the sand-dunes of Wadi Rima, was attacked and defeated by a loyalist force from Washm. This resulted in his deposition from the rulership of the Hasa by his own family and people, and he was succeeded by his brother, Sa‘dun. Meanwhile Zaid ibn Zamil had come up unheralded from Dilam and astonished the Amir by tendering his unconditional submission. A heavy indemnity was imposed on him to test his sincerity, but he paid it in full, though ‘Abdul ‘Aziz immediately remitted a considerable part of it as a spontaneous gesture of friendliness towards an old enemy. Zaid, however, was soon in trouble again for taking the law into his own hands to pay off an old score against one Fawwaz ibn Muhammad of Hauta. The murder of the latter brought ‘Abdul ‘Aziz down in wrath to Dilam, where he passed sentence of banishment on Zaid and installed Sulaiman ibn ‘Affaisan as Governor. Zilfi and Sudair now sent a deputation to renew their oaths of allegiance, and with it came Sulaiman ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab, the brother of the Wahhabi high-priest, who had been out of favour and in self-imposed exile ever since the early days of the contumacy of Huraimala. Sulaiman was welcomed by his brother as a returning prodigal and generously provided with all that was requisite for his comfort at the latter end of his life, which, according to the annals of the Wahhabi State, was spent in the odour of sanctity.

It was now the turn of Yamama to make submission to Dar‘iya and to recant as soon as the arrival of Hamad al ‘Uzaini to take up the post of priest and teacher had given them a taste of the rigours of the new régime. Sa‘ud at once led an army to the neighbouring village of Sulaimiya and posted detachments at Dilam and other towns of Kharj to forestall the spreading of Yamama’s bad example. He then began to parley with Hasan al Bijadi, the rebel Governor, demanding the banishment of all persons who had been responsible for the ejection of the Wahhabi teacher. Hasan promised compliance on the condition of Sa‘ud’s retirement, but no sooner had the immediate danger passed than he went back on his word and attacked Sulaimiya, without, however, making any impression on its loyal population. Zaid ibn Zamil was now encouraged to take a hand in the game which he had left with his banishment, and sent up his son to raise Kharj against the Wahhabis. Yamama and Dilam joined his standard for an attack on all Muslims in the province, and Sulaimiya was singled out for first punishment. Zaid himself appeared to press the siege, but Sa‘ud had no difficulty in relieving the place, while ‘Abdul ‘Aziz hastened with a large force to threaten Dilam. The fighting here was inconclusive, and the Wahhabis lost a valuable leader in ‘Abdullah ibn Hasan, the Governor of the Qasim, who was killed. Early in the next year, 1777, Sa‘ud again appeared in Kharj, and a great battle was fought in the Sahba valley close to Yamama, without any definite result. Meanwhile Sudair rebelled, and the Wahhabi Amir sent his brother ‘Abdullah to deal with the rising. A number of the local notables were brought down to Dar‘iya as hostages, but they managed to escape, and were soon making common cause with Yamama, which was subjected to a further attack by ‘Abdullah. Again, however, there was trouble in Sudair, where the Governor of Harma, Juwaisir al Husaini, raised the standard of revolt and attacked the neighbouring town of Majma'a, which appealed to Dar'iya for help. Sa'ud hastened to the scene, and after sustained fighting Harma surrendered, accepting the banishment of Juwaisir as a condition of peace. A new Governor was appointed, and Sa'ud found it necessary to make various other changes in the administrative personnel of the province before returning home.

The following year saw an intensification of the struggle in Kharj, 'Abdul 'Aziz appearing suddenly before Dilam while Zaid was away on a visit to Yamama. At the sound of firing the latter hastened back, and a great battle took place, after which the Wahhabi prince attacked Na'jan and returned home with much booty. Meanwhile Sa'dun ibn 'Arai'ar came up to the confines of Kharj and invited 'Abdul 'Aziz to enter into a treaty of friendship with him. To this the Wahhabi ruler agreed, while making the curious stipulation that Sa'dun should not loiter about the frontiers of Najd if his intentions were dishonest; and very shortly after the treaty was denounced in consequence of an attack by Sa'dun on tribesmen encamped at the watering of Mabaidh, from which the Hasa forces returned homewards across the Dahna and Summan desert in the summer season, suffering greatly from thirst in the process. A peaceful autumn was followed by a renewal of backsliding at Harma, whence emissaries were sent out to invite the assistance of Zilfi and the Hasa. Meanwhile a party of men disguised as women was sent across to seize the bastions commanding the walls of Majma'a, but the ruse failed, and the Governor of Jalajil sent a force to hold the enemy, now assembled in strength, until 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad could come up from Dar'iya. The enemy now shut himself up in Harma, which was besieged, while its palm-groves were mercilessly cut down and the people reduced to great straits, until at length they surrendered to Saʻud, who came up with strong reinforcements and destroyed the forts of the town, after banishing all the rebel leaders. Two expeditions against Zilfi in the following year produced no result except that the Washm and Sudair contingents returning from the second lost heavily in an ambush laid for them by Saʻdun.

In 1781 an intensive campaign was initiated by Saʻud against Dilam, and a strong fortress, known as Qasr al Bidaʻ, was constructed and garrisoned by him to maintain a close blockade of the rebels, who appealed to Saʻdun. The activities of the garrison of this fort caused serious inconvenience to all the rebel strongholds in Kharj, and extended as far as Yamama, until the enemy forces determined on a great effort to capture or destroy it. Saʻdun brought up his artillery, and assaults were made on the walls under cover of bullet-proof stockades, but the garrison defended itself with great valour and desperation, until at length Saʻdun tired of the profitless enterprise and withdrew, in spite of the protests and entreaties of his allies. He now found his artillery a serious impediment to rapid retreat, and decided to leave it for the time being in the keeping of the people of Yamama, where in due course it fell into the hands of the Wahhabis.

Expeditions against the Dhafir and ʻAnaza tribes at Mabaidh and against Hauta and Naʻjan filled up the interval until the occurrence of a disaster of the first magnitude to the Wahhabi cause. Without warning, the whole province of the Qasim, except Buraida and Rass, rose in rebellion during the spring of 1783. The leaders of the movement had met and concerted a plan for simultaneous risings in every part of the province to take place on a certain Friday. The loyalists were to be searched out and slain everywhere, and Sa'dun, at the invitation of the conspirators, moved up to support the rebellion with a large force of Bani Khalid and 'Anaza. The first blow appears to have been struck at Shamas, close by Buraida, with the murder of the Wahhabi Governor, 'Ali ibn Jaushan; while at Khabra the local Imam was struck down by an assassin as he led the Friday prayers. Similar occurrences were staged at other centres of the rebellion, and all persons suspected of genuine leanings towards Wahhabism were seized and killed, while no time was lost in the despatch of a large force from 'Anaiza to attack the headquarters of Wahhabi rule at Buraida. The garrison, however, resisted every attack with desperate valour, and the war was even carried into the enemy's country by vigorous sorties supported by energetic raids from Rass. On one occasion a force from the latter place took more than 400 sheep in a foray, while the Buraida garrison, apart from various minor exploits, captured a large store of munitions in one of the rebel camps. Thus five months passed in strenuous fighting, until the enemy moved up one day to the assault behind stockades similar to those formerly used in the attacks on the Bida' fort at Dilam. Desperate hand-to-hand fighting took place around one of the city bastions, but the defenders won the day, and a renewal of the assault in full force met with no better success. The tribesmen in the rebel army now began to be discouraged, and rapidly melted away, while Hujailan, the loyalist Governor, taking advantage of the weakening of the enemy, led out a strong sortie, which resulted in the capture of Shamas and the headlong flight of its inhabitants with the dispersing tribesmen. The latter were followed up vigorously by Hujailan, who inflicted a signal defeat on them in the Mistawi plain and captured all their belongings, which were found to contain much stuff apparently looted from Madina. This part of the booty was returned to that city under the orders of the Wahhabi Amir. Meanwhile the weakened rebel forces, seeing no further hope of success against a defence so ably maintained and now developing into offence, determined to surrender without further ado, and deputations were sent to Hujailan to sue for peace. The conditions imposed by him were accepted, and the Qasim, after nearly a year of rebellion, relapsed once more into its former subjection to the Wahhabi State. ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, who appears to have taken no active steps to save the Qasim from the grave danger above related, now sent Sa‘ud to relieve Sudair from a threatened occupation by the retreating forces of Sa‘dun, which had temporarily captured the town of Raudha by cutting off its water supply with the assistance of a disloyal section of the inhabitants led by the Governor, ‘Aun ibn Madhi. Sa‘dun fled on the approach of Sa‘ud, who attacked the town and, by cutting down its palms, forced it to sue for mercy. Ibn Madhi himself had fallen in one of the fights which had taken place after Sa‘ud's arrival, and the remaining members of his family were banished from the town, while a substantial indemnity was imposed on those who had joined them. A new Governor was appointed to Raudha, and the close of a year which had opened so alarmingly found Wahhabi rule and prestige fully re-established throughout the provinces of Najd.

‘Abdul ‘Aziz was now called upon to face another grave danger to his country, which during the summer of 1784 was visited by a terrible famine, inevitably accompanied by a rise of prices for all the necessaries of life. The weakened population perished in thousands from lack of food, and people apparently in good health would fall down and die of sheer exhaustion while praying in the mosques or going about their ordinary avocations. And fear opened the door to superstitious whisperings potentially dangerous to the State itself. Surely there must be some reason for such a visitation, and perchance the devil himself was at work with his attendant Jinns to remind the people of their long and growing neglect of his claims to their attention. In these circumstances we get a short and welcome respite from the eternal monotony of the desultory campaigns which went slowly but surely to the building up of the first Wahhabi Empire during the latter half of the eighteenth century; and in their place the annals of Dar'iya record the measures adopted by the Wahhabi sovereign to relieve the widespread distress of his people. In every town, village and district registers were prepared of the poor persons in need of relief, which was provided at the charge of public and municipal funds; and the local Governors were held responsible to see that the administration of such relief was properly carried out. Nevertheless, the famine, which lasted about two years, appears to have taken a heavy toll of life in all parts of Arabia; and it is significant that, when the Grand Sharif Surur notified the Wahhabi ruler of the removal of the embargo which had some years previously been imposed on the free access of his subjects to Mecca during the Great Pilgrimage, only 300 persons were able to take advantage of this concession in the early summer of 1785. The readmission of the Wahhabis to the pilgrimage is in itself an incident of some importance in the history of Arabia at this period. Surur, now practically independent of all control of the titular Calif at Constantinople, had begun to develop political and territorial ambitions, which had declared themselves in raids against the neighbouring province of ‘Asir and the confines of Najd. A further step in the same direction was the embargo already referred to, whose object was to extort from the Wahhabi State some admission of the Sharif’s suzerainty over all Arabia. This was not forthcoming, and the boomerang came back on the head of the Grand Sharif, as the annual pilgrim caravans from ‘Iraq and Persia had perforce to pass through Wahhabi territory to get to Mecca. On the journey they were subjected to the active attentions of Wahhabi raiding parties, from which the Sharif was powerless to protect them; and the natural result was that the Turkish Pasha at Baghdad was constrained to forbid the departure of caravans until the situation improved, as the Persian Government held him responsible for their treatment in the desert, and had on one occasion asserted its view of that responsibility by attacking Basra by way of reprisal for the holding up of a Persian caravan. In those days the Hijaz depended for its prosperity on the overland pilgrimage, which has been almost entirely superseded in modern times by an overseas visitation; and the merchants of Mecca and Madina did not hesitate to demand of the Sharif some modification of political ambitions which could only end in the ruin of all his subjects. Surur had no alternative but to give in, and the gift of horses and camels that the Wahhabi ruler sent down with the small Wahhabi pilgrimage of the famine year was an outward and visible sign of the restoration of normal relations between the two Governments; but it was only a lull in a storm which would inevitably increase in fury as time went on.

This period of common affliction was not altogether without its alarums and excursions, but Sa'ud's raid into the rich province of the Hasa in 1786 was probably due to the urgent need of feeding his numerous troops rather than to political reasons; and similar causes may have inspired an attack on the oasis of 'Anaiza. Otherwise the military initiative was with the would-be disturbers of the peace, and foremost among them was Zaid ibn Zamil. His earthly course was, however, nearly run, and his bold and largely successful raid on a Subai' encampment almost under the walls of Riyadh only brought out Sulaiman ibn 'Affaisan, the Governor of Kharj, in pursuit. A battle was fought at Hunaiya, west of Tuwaiq, and Zaid not only lost all the booty he had taken, but was himself killed. His mantle descended on his son, Barrak, who at the beginning of 1786 raided Manfuha, but drew off without success as soon as he heard that Sa'ud was marching to its relief.

The Wahhabis renewed their military activity as soon as the famine ended, and Sa'ud devoted his attention mainly to the southern area, where the Yaman tribes and the Qahtan were becoming dangerous. The Subai' were attacked near Hariq; and a decisive victory over a concentration of the southern tribes at Ruwaidha was only checked by the intervention of the Suhul tribe, in ignorance of the fact that the troops of the Government were engaged in the affair. The Makharim section of the Dawasir tribe now hastened to make its submission to the new faith, whose most fanatical supporters they have been ever since. And the final surrender of Dilam to Sa'ud after a sustained and vigorous siege made so great an impression on the whole neighbourhood that not only the whole of Kharj, but also the provinces of Fara' and Aflaj sent deputations to accept the Wahhabi dispensation on their behalf. The Wahhabi

State now extended as far as Wadi Dawasir in the south, and the death of Barrak ibn Zaid in battle seemed to give promise of a period of internal calm, during which the attention of ‘Abdul ‘Aziz would be required in other quarters.

At the beginning of 1787 the Hasa began to feel the effect of internal dissensions among the Bani Khalid, and it appears that two sections of this tribe, the Mahashir and Subaih, rose against Sa‘dun in favour of one ‘Abdul Muhsin, and secured the alliance of the powerful Muntafiq tribe of ‘Iraq under its chief Thuwaini. Raid and counter-raid threw the whole province into disorder, and Sa‘dun, seeing affairs going ill for him, fled to throw himself on ‘Abdul ‘Aziz's mercy at Dar‘iya. The latter, having already entered into an understanding with the Muntafiq chief, was somewhat disconcerted by Sa‘dun's appeal, and hastily wrote to him not to approach his territory until he had had time to consult Thuwaini. Sa‘dun, however, determined to take advantage of the Arab laws of hospitality, and as ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was issuing from the gate of his palace on the way to the mosque for the Friday prayer, Sa‘dun confronted him unannounced. There was nothing to do but make the best of a bad business, and the Wahhabi ruler, having issued orders for the reception of his inconvenient guest, proceeded to the mosque, on his return from which he closeted himself with Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab to discuss the position in all its bearings. He was aware of the danger of offending the Muntafiq, which was not only a powerful tribe in itself, but could count on the support of the Ottoman Government, which ‘Abdul ‘Aziz had no desire to offend or challenge. The Wahhabi high-priest perhaps saw the possibilities of the situation clearer than his Prince, and, at any rate, set himself to reassure the latter by quoting passages from the Quran. The coming of Sa'dun was evidently an act of God, which it would be folly to resist whatever the consequences. And did not God Himself say (in the Quran): "Perchance God may create love between you and those to whom you are hostile, for God is powerful and forgiving, merciful"? 'Abdul 'Aziz took comfort from the Shaikh's encouragement, and no longer evinced any hesitation in accepting the obligations of a host towards his old enemy; but it is scarcely likely that either he or the Shaikh saw further into the future than an inevitable reckoning with Thuwaini. Yet the verdict of history must be that this apparently insignificant incident was the first definite step of the house of Sa'ud on the path that led to Empire. Whether either prince or priest had ever even in their dreams envisaged the possibility of kicking against the pricks of the great world beyond the confines of the Arabian desert it would be impossible to say with any certainty, but the nervousness of 'Abdul 'Aziz and the confident reassurances of his chief adviser suggest that they were now, at any rate, aware that they had thrown out a challenge with which they must go through to the bitter end. And it would seem that the older man, with more than four-score years of life behind him already, faced the prospect with the greater equanimity in the conviction that the day was near for his final reckoning with the God whom he had served so zealously for fifty years. He was not himself to enter the promised land, but it was his counsel in the matter of Sa'dun which pointed the way to the final triumph of his cause.

'Abdul 'Aziz, though reassured by the Shaikh's attitude, immediately sought to turn away the wrath of the Muntafiq with soft words, and despatched to Thuwaini a letter explaining his action, protesting his inability to do otherwise in the circumstances, and guaranteeing the good behaviour of his guest for the future. But Thuwaini was not to be appeased so easily. His fury knew no bounds, and he denounced the understanding which linked him in friendship with the Wahhabi Court, on which he swore to be avenged without delay. And while Sa'ud, accompanied by the Dhafir and elements from the Bani Khalid, was conducting a successful and profitable raid against the Qahtan in the south, news was brought to Hujailan, Governor of Buraida, that Thuwaini had begun his campaign with a large force of townsfolk and Badawin from the Basra and Suq al Shuyukh districts. Hujailan immediately collected a force from the Qasim towns, which was joined by various sections of the 'Anaza tribe, and marched eastward to forestall the advance of the enemy before he reached the settled provinces of Najd. The armies met in the desert, and after a strenuous battle Thuwaini retreated, leaving much booty in the hands of the Wahhabis. He did not, however, intend to leave matters as they were, and the winter season of 1787-88 saw him back with a larger army, including artillery, with which he took up a position at Tuma on the Qasim frontier. The village held out against all his attacks, but he eventually achieved his object by a stratagem. Pretending to sue for peace and to be desirous of entering the Wahhabi fold, he was admitted to the village, whereupon his followers suddenly rose against the inhabitants and seized the fort. An attack on Buraida, however, failed, and Thuwaini decided to withdraw. His rear harried by the enemy, he eventually reached the 'Iraq frontier with an idea of repairing his broken fortunes by the seizure of Basra from his Turkish overlord. Sulaiman Pasha hastened down from Baghdad to meet this threat, and Thuwaini was crushed at Safwan, whence he fled to Kuwait and eventually betook himself to Dar'iya to make his peace with 'Abdul 'Aziz. No sooner, however, had he returned to his tribesmen than he broke the truce and again marched on Najd for a final desperate effort. He sent to the Hasa asking for assistance in his campaign, and sought to infuse a spirit of desperation into his own followers by ordering them to bring their womenfolk and families and even merchandise with the army, as he intended not merely to raid, but to settle down to a long occupation of Najd. 'Abdul 'Aziz called out the full military muster of his provinces and placed Sa'ud in command to meet and resist the enemy wherever he might strike. Thuwaini soon found that he could make no progress, and gave the order for retreat, while Sa'ud, following him up, attacked the Shammar contingents in the rear and took much booty. Meanwhile the Hasa forces, thinking that Thuwaini was awaiting them, came up under their leaders, 'Abdul Muhsin and Duwaihis, and only learned of the Muntafiq leader's withdrawal after they had crossed the Dahna. There was nothing for it but immediate retreat, and, the hot weather having already set in, the retreat became a rout in the waterless deserts, where many of the Hasa townsfolk succumbed to thirst.

Meanwhile Hujailan had set out from Buraida with a large force to show the flag of the true faith in Jabal Shammar, which now for the first time comes within the purview of Wahhabi history. Marching and fighting without respite, he forced town after town to submit to the new Islam, and he did not leave the province until its conquest was complete. Thus by the middle of 1788 the Wahhabi State had reached northwards to the great Nafud, and the whole of Najd had at last, and for the first time in history, become united under the rule of a single sovereign. The south-western tribes still gave trouble, but even in this direction a gleam of hope appeared in the acceptance of Islam by an obscure chief of a section of the Qahtan destined to considerable prominence in the crucial period now rapidly approaching. This man was Hadi ibn Ghanim, more commonly known simply as Ibn Qarmala, after his mother; and it is recorded of him that he came into the fold for no other reason than that the spirit moved him thereto.

The adhesion of the Makharim Dawasir to the Wahhabi cause, which has already been recorded, now produced the inevitable reaction in the Wadi province, where the brothers Rubaiya’ and Badn, sons of Zaid, proceeded uncompromisingly to attack the established Pantheon of idols, rocks and trees. A certain tree, whose powers for good and evil were widely acknowledged, was the special objective of the iconoclasts, who, however, took the precaution of building themselves a fort for their protection against the storm which would be raised by their action. The fort duly completed, the tree was burned down, with the result that the whole population of the Wadi rose against the perpetrators of this sacrilegious act. The Makharim were besieged in their fort, but the enemy were unable to make any impression on the new walls, and eventually decided to abandon the siege after throwing the carcase of a dead donkey into the only well available to the defenders. But the latter were saved by what was hailed as a miracle and a special sign of God’s protection: a new source was discovered and the Makharim enjoyed a respite from danger until reinforcements arrived from Dar‘iya under Mubarak ibn ‘Abdul Hadi. Meanwhile the enemy set to work building a fort to command that of the faithful, and launched attack after attack against the gate and walls of the latter. In these assaults they used "creepers," which appear to have been a sort of box or shed, each containing a force of about thirty persons, who moved it forward as they advanced, thus screened from the fire of the defenders. Their object was to get up to the gate, of which apparently they had procured duplicate keys, in order to open it and let in an attacking party. This device brought them no more success than their previous assaults, but provisions were running out in the fort, and the breaching of one of its walls made the position sufficiently precarious to warrant negotiations with the enemy. The terms agreed on were honourable enough, and the Makharim garrison was allowed to go forth with its arms, leaving the Wadi to the infidels. Rubaiya' took his followers straight up to Dar'iya, where they were treated as heroes and provided with the wherewithal to resume their activities. On their return to the Wadi they built a fort over against Tamra, in the gap of the Tuwaiq ridge which commanded the main route between the Wadi settlements and Sulaiyil; and from this point of vantage they harried the neighbourhood with such effect that three important sections of the Dawasir—the Hanabija, the 'Amur and the Wullamin—declared their adhesion to the Wahhabi creed, while the enemy, despairing of any serious assistance from their Gods, sent a deputation to the chief of Najran asking his help in their predicament. He hastened to the Wadi, and joined with the Rijban and Wudda'in sections in a series of attacks on the Wahhabi sections, but lack of immediate success resulted in his withdrawal and in the final submission of his allies to the winning cause. A teacher was sent down from Riyadh at the request of Rubaiya', but after six months the Rijban and Wudda‘in returned to their backsliding and ‘Abdul ‘Aziz had to send down Sulaiman ibn ‘Affaisan to deal with the revolt. The usual desultory fighting followed until the rebels sued for peace, which was only granted on the condition that the leaders should accompany the victor back to Dar‘iya. The Wahhabi Prince contented himself with imposing a fine of 2000 *riyals* and 1000 rifles; and the Wadi entered once more into the peace of Islam.

Sulaiman ibn ‘Affaisan was now employed in raids against Qatar, where the local family of Al abu Rumaih was forced to submission after it had suffered a defeat and the loss of much cattle and other goods. The Wahhabi force then attacked Jisha, at the eastern edge of the Hasa oasis, and from there proceeded to ‘Uqair, where the garrison took refuge in the fort while the attackers helped themselves to all the merchandise stored in the warehouse for transport to Hufuf. On the return march they fell in with a force marching to attack Najd under one of the exiled chiefs of Yamama and inflicted a severe defeat on it at the wells of Haradh. Meanwhile Sa‘ud hastened to the Qasim to crush a threatened rising at ‘Anaiza, and, on his return to Dar‘iya, found that the Shaikh had convened an assembly representative of all Wahhabi elements to do obeisance to him as heir apparent to his father’s throne. The important question of the succession was thus settled once and for all, securing the stability of the state in the event of any domestic catastrophe in the royal family; and the matter was by no means a mere formality, though Sa‘ud’s record of active service in the Wahhabi cause had, in fact, removed all reasonable doubt of his ultimate accession. Nevertheless, the elective principle has ever since the Prophet’s time, as indeed it was in the patriarchal régime which preceded it, been the sheet-anchor of the Arabian constitution. The modern world is apt to regard Arabia as one of those happy lands where despotism is still the order of the day; yet, in fact, there is probably no country in the world where the principles of democracy are so well understood and so strictly enforced. The public investment of a ruler with authority to rule is an essential ceremony imposed by the customary law of the land, and the word used for it is *Bi'at*, signifying a contract between mutually satisfied parties, as, for instance, between merchants bargaining to buy and sell. A contract accepted by both parties before witnesses is binding in Shar' law.

Sa'ud, now heir apparent, spent the winter of 1788–89 in sustained military activity in the eastern desert. A raid against the Bani Khalid was the prelude to more important operations against the Muntafiq. The watering of Dijani was the rendezvous for the contingents summoned to the war flag, and while Sa'ud was there awaiting his father's endorsement of his plans, scouts brought in word that the enemy was encamped at Hamdh. Sa'ud immediately moved eastward and appeared before the Muntafiq camp, which, though surprised, was soon in motion for battle. The first charge of the Wahhabi cavalry was decisively defeated and the attacking force began to waver, but Sa'ud rallied his men and launched his whole strength at the camp. The Muntafiq broke and fled, leaving many horses, tents and other paraphernalia (including the enormous guest-tent of Thuwaini himself) in the hands of the victors. Sa'ud, not content to rest on these laurels, now planned to pursue the enemy northward towards Wafra, where water would be available; but there was murmuring among his followers, who, satisfied with their booty, pressed for an immediate return home *via* the wells of Qariya.

However, it was to Wafra that they went, and then apparently on to Hafar in the Batin valley, where they fell in with a raiding party of the Sahban and killed all the ninety men composing it. The return march homeward was for the most part through waterless country, and the Wahhabis began to suffer from thirst, but they were saved from disaster by a welcome fall of rain. Sa'ud was soon again in motion for a campaign in the Hasa, where he failed to make any impression on the 'Atban defenders of Mubarraz, and, marching past Hufuf without stopping to attack it, reached and captured Fudhul after a severe fight ending in the massacre of its gallant inhabitants. The Wahhabi force then withdrew unmolested by the Hasa army, which had concentrated at Mubarraz in case of another attack on that town.

The following winter found Sa'ud back in the Hasa, to be confronted by 'Abdul Muhsin and his full force at Ghuraimil, in the northern part of the province. After a sustained struggle the enemy fled and, as usual, much booty fell into the hands of the Wahhabis. 'Abdul Muhsin and his family fled to Qatar, while the tribesmen who formed the backbone of his army decided to accept Wahhabi rule rather than quit their homelands. This decision did not, however, affect the towns, and Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar, who had gone to Dar'iya with Sa'dun and had lived there in exile until he was invited to accompany Sa'ud on the occasion of this expedition, was asked to take charge of the province with a view to reducing it entirely to effective submission. He did not, however, appear to relish the prospect, and, on his declining the honour, Sa'ud himself moved forward for the same purpose; he did not get very far, as he seems to have come to the conclusion that the risks scarcely justified the enterprise and to have returned straight to Dar'iya.

Meanwhile trouble was brewing in the west, where the tribes appeared to be coming under the influence of intrigue from the Hijaz. The Bani Hajir, after crushing with heavy loss an expedition led against them by one Rubai'a al Qaid and Ibn Qarmala, openly declared their apostasy, and were joined by most of the tribal elements who had taken part in the attack against them. And it was at this juncture that Sharif Ghalib wrote to 'Abdul 'Aziz asking him to send someone learned in the new way to explain its implications at Mecca. The invitation was eagerly accepted, and one of the Dar'iya Shaikhs, 'Abdul 'Aziz al Hasin, was deputed for the purpose, carrying with him an autograph letter from the aged Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, in which reference was made to the earlier mission of 'Abdul 'Aziz to the Court of Sharif Ahmad and the same arguments were adduced in detail which had satisfied the Meccan 'Ulama of those days. The deputy was honourably received by Ghalib, who spent many hours in discussion with him, and even frankly admitted the soundness of his argument. The Meccan ecclesiastics, however, brought their influence to bear on the Sharif, who seems now to have withdrawn his earlier admissions. The Wahhabi envoy begged him to convene a full session of the local divines for the public discussion of the problems which divided the two parties; but the latter absolutely refused to enter upon any such debate, and categorically declared to Ghalib that there was nothing to expect from the Wahhabi leaders but preaching inconsistent with all the principles and practice of his and their ancestors. Al Hasin was accordingly dismissed, and returned to tell the tale in Najd, while Ghalib prepared to take the initiative in a struggle which had now become inevitable. Even so in later years was one of his descendants destined to provoke a contest which would involve himself and his dynasty in final and crushing disaster.

Intrigue and propaganda among the western tribes of Najd were the weapons with which Ghalib began his campaign for the uprooting of the Wahhabi heresy; and by the time Sharif ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, who had been appointed to the chief command, was ready to start, an army of enormous proportions was at his disposal. During the march fresh accessions of strength were received even from elements previously well within the Wahhabi fold, as also from such restive quarters as the Mutair tribe, under its chief Husain al Duwish, and the Qahtan. Without opposition the hosts of the ungodly reached the little fortified village of Qasr Bassam, at the southern extremity of the Sirr district, after a march of some 300 miles. And, with news coming in daily of backsliding in every part of the country, the old Shaikh at Dar‘iya may well have trembled for the fate of his life's work, threatened with sudden and irreparable disaster when seemingly so near to complete success. To add to his woes his son ‘Abdul ‘Aziz sickened and died at this juncture, and death also claimed Shaikh ‘Isa ibn Qasim, who had been one of the first adherents of the new creed and a lifelong colleague of the Chief Priest, who was now himself nearly at the end of his long course.

Qasr Bassam, with its diminutive population of twenty able-bodied men, was, however, destined to make Wahhabi history. Its stout-hearted refusal to surrender was followed by a massed assault on its walls, which was thrown back again and again until Sharif ‘Abdul ‘Aziz drew off to await further reinforcements. For four months he lingered idly about the Sirr district, while the delay enabled the Wahhabi Prince to rally the countryside to his standard. Sa‘ud led the army up to the Rumhain tract in Washm, whence, with the Nafud between him and the enemy, he sent out raiding parties to harass the tribes who had thrown in their lot with the invaders. Hasan ibn Mishari, his cousin, kept the main body of the latter in play without coming to serious grips with their superior numbers, while Sa‘ud himself led a raid against the Mutair and mulcted them handsomely in livestock and other booty. Simultaneously with these activities another Wahhabi leader named Nughaimish was sent down to Wadi Dawasir to check a rebellion of the Huwail and Jamahir sections, fomented and assisted by Ghalib's lieutenant, Sharif Shakir. Rubaiya‘ and Mubarak, encouraged by the arrival of this welcome reinforcement, took the field and attacked Dam itself. The rebels were severely defeated, and the situation in the Wadi was already under control when the Sharifian leader in the main theatre of operations, having received reinforcements, resumed the attack on Qasr Bassam, only to incur further heavy losses and to recoil unsuccessful.

Unable to make any headway, but otherwise strong enough to maintain his position in Najd, Sharif ‘Abdul ‘Aziz made an indirect appeal to his sovereign for yet further reinforcements. He had conquered Najd, he wrote, and it only remained for Ghalib to make an appearance to receive the formal submission of tribes and towns. He knew well that the Prince of the Hijaz would not venture into the deserts of Central Arabia without a considerable force; and Ghalib, leaving nothing to chance, brought up his artillery. Sharif ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, doubtless glad to be relieved of the chief responsibility, hastened to meet his master at Sha‘ra on his arrival there during the month of Ramdhan—that is to say, in March 1791. What explanations passed between them history does not record; but

Ghalib's honour was definitely engaged, and he announced with much pomp and circumstance that he would not leave Najd until he had utterly destroyed its heresy and its heretics. Circumstances, however, did not conspire to forward his plans. Constant activity produced nothing but heavy losses among the more solid elements of his army, while its Badawin auxiliaries kept aloof, awaiting the opportunities of pursuit and plunder which the main force was expected to create for them. In disgust at the army's constant failure to make any impression on the enemy, they slipped away unobtrusively to their homes; and Ghalib's position gradually became sufficiently serious to make him think of retreat. In the end he yielded to the inevitable, and gave the signal for withdrawal, whereupon the initiative passed to the Wahhabis, who lost no time in following up and harassing the retreating and disheartened forces. Muhammad ibn Mu‘aiqal was sent by Sa‘ud in pursuit of the main column, and took a heavy toll of life and booty from the Qahtan tribesmen, who had deemed it the better part of valour to retire from Najd for the time being. Meanwhile Sa‘ud himself marched north to avenge himself on the Shammar and Mutair, who had withdrawn to Jabal Shammar after the departure of the Sharif; and the booty which fell into his hands after a desperate fight at the watering of ‘Adwa was of prodigious proportions —6000 camels and 100,000 sheep.

Thus the first serious encounter between the Wahhabis and the Sharif of Mecca, who had deliberately provoked it, had served only to emphasise the strength of the new fanatics. The puritan creed, for all its lack of appeal to the easy-going materialism of the Badawin Arab, had aroused in the more settled communities something of a national sense, which, without entirely eliminating the traditional passion of the populace for internecine strife, could be brought into play under the stress of a common danger to their independence. And the success which had so triumphantly vindicated this feeling of a common interest in defence would before long engender ambitions of a more aggressive character, whose pursuit would more readily evoke the enthusiasm of the Badawin, though the tribes would ever prove an element of weakness in the hour of trial. More than a century was to pass before any serious attempt would be made to solve this crucial problem of the Arabs, the basic antagonism of town and tribe. But its solution was to be one of the outstanding achievements of our own times, and it is not without interest to observe at these earlier stages the shadows that were but harbingers of coming events.

About the middle of April 1792, cheered by the messages that came from Sa‘ud, who was raiding on the coast of the Persian Gulf and had received the submission of Qatif and encompassed the destruction of its idols and images, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab died after a short illness in his eighty-ninth year, after nearly fifty years of unremitting toil in a cause which he himself initiated and which still perpetuates his memory in the *sobriquet* first applied to it in derision by its opponents and subsequently acquiesced in by its votaries, though to this day they do not apply it to themselves. The creed he taught never professed to be a new revelation or even a new interpretation of Islam; and the teacher never claimed a prophetic status. Yet Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab was in reality something more than a doctor of divinity; and his place in the history of religions is comparable in relation to the founder of Islam with that of Muhammad himself in relation to the two great revelations which had anticipated his own. Such a view of his standing would, of course, not commend itself to the ecclesiastical authorities of Islam, while he himself ever appealed to the authority of Ahmad ibn Hanbal in support of his interpretation of Islamic doctrine; but viewed from the standpoint of history alone, the Wahhabi movement in Arabia has all the characteristics of a prophetic dispensation. It is to its author's credit, and proof sufficient of his disinterestedness and political sagacity, that he was never tempted to assume the guise of the promised Messiah. Mahdis have been common fruit on the trees that have grown up from Islamic seed in exotic lands, but for some reason the literalism of Arabia itself has never favoured such growths. And, little though his figure appears in the dreary annals of the alarums and excursions of his time, the Wahhabi seer seems to stand out as a politician of amazing astuteness, appealing to just that embryo of fanaticism innate in the hedonistic materialism of the Arab race which would enable him to achieve success in a cause that could scarcely be popular. He seems never to have had any ambition for temporal power, nor even to have coveted any kind of titular spiritual status, for he insisted on the temporal ruler being not only Amir, but also Imam or Imam al Muslimin, a title conferring a spiritual status comparable only with that of Khalifa. Nevertheless, the Shaikh's co-operation with his Prince partook something of the nature of a condominium; he was consulted in everything by one whose aims were in complete harmony with his own; occasionally we find him exercising the royal prerogative in issuing orders of a purely administrative character; and in general it may be said that, though he had no ambitions either for himself or his family, he appreciated to the full the advantages of being the power behind the throne. And the throne reciprocated the sentiment, for the strength of the Wahhabi constitution lay, as it still lies, in its appeal to authority unreservedly acknowledged by every member of the community in virtue of his claim to be a Muslim; and, while it would have been dangerous for the executive Governor to be the interpreter of such authority, he had at hand one who could always silence criticism with a bull. But perhaps the chief strength of the combination lay in the unassailable honesty of both parties towards each other, towards the people and towards their God. Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab died penniless, leaving nothing for his children to inherit except the considerable debts which the Arab historian naïvely records as evidence of his indisputable virtue. He was buried at Dar‘iya, whose tumbled ruins are all that remain to-day to preserve the memory of a once great city, and no man can tell where he lies among the faithful who surround him. *Si monumentum quæris, circumspice!* His monument is Arabia of the Wahhabis.

CHAPTER IV

BEGINNINGS OF WAHHABI EMPIRE

WITH the death of its originator, the Wahhabi cause, although it had by no means seen the last of the petty alarums and excursions which had characterised its existence up to this time, passed from the stage of consolidation into that of expansion. No ideal of imperial aggrandisement seems at any time to have been formulated by the dead Shaikh or by the ruler who survived him, who to all appearances was perfectly prepared to live on terms of peace and amity both with the Ottoman authorities in Mesopotamia and with the Sharifian régime in the Hijaz. But the rapid and uncanny growth of a stable and united community among the notoriously feckless Badawin of the desert did not pass unnoticed by the decadent neighbours of Arabia, who, while conscious enough of the laxity which had become a traditional accompaniment of their formal religion, none the less resented the aspersions cast by an upstart sect on their practice of a faith to which they clung tenaciously as a moral bulwark against the infidel. At the same time, as evidenced by the experience of the Mecca conferences already referred to, they were neither able to find a flaw in the Wahhabi argument nor to reconcile themselves with the acceptance of Wahhabi practice; and the *amour-propre* of the Islamic states was engaged to defend the established ecclesiastical system of Islam from the innovations of the would-be reformers. It is possible that in any case, with complete unity and stability secured within the natural limits of desert Arabia, the obligation of *Jihad* would in due course have been interpreted as an excuse for militant imperialism against unoffending backsliders beyond those limits; but it is only fair to the memory of the Wahhabi leaders to record that in point of fact it was their neighbours, irresistibly attracted to the storm-centre as a compass needle is to the Pole, came out into the desert to look for the trouble that was brewing for them. Before long they were to have their fill of it at their own doors, and it was the activities of Thuwaini and Ghalib to which we must trace the first small beginnings of a Wahhabi Empire which waxed and waned concurrently with that of the great Napoleon during the first two decades of the nineteenth century.

The Hasa province, which since the days of the Carmathian heresy had remained one of the traditional strongholds of dissent from the orthodox doctrines of Sunni Islam, was the first objective of the Wahhabi ruler's attention during the years following the death of the Shaikh. It was essential to stamp out the smouldering embers of an organised Church based on one of the early schisms of Islam; and it was still more essential to open a way to the coast on which the Wahhabi interior depended largely for the necessaries of life. It was no question of imperialistic ideals, but a matter of life and death. The Hasa had once controlled a large part of the interior, and might do so again if the interior could not control it; and the political control of the Hasa over inner Arabia would spell the end of the new religion. Sa'ud accordingly was sent forth towards the end of 1792 to establish Wahhabi control over the eastern province. 'Abdul Muhsin, who had been killed during his flight to Qatar after the operations already recorded, had been succeeded in the leadership of the Bani Khalid and as ruler of the Hasa by his son, Barrak, who now went out to meet the new challenge. On the way eastward he fell in with two sections of the Subai‘ tribe, and was engaged in battle with them when Sa‘ud appeared on the scene. Barrak retired and Sa‘ud held a council of war, at which it was decided to pursue him into the Hasa. He had gone northward to the wells of Safa, where in due course the Wahhabi army engaged his forces and gained a decisive victory, killing 600 men and capturing many camels and horses. Sa‘ud now marched on the Hasa after sending messengers ahead of him with letters inviting the people to join the true faith; and the discomfiture of Barrak had already disposed them to make their submission quietly. They sent back a message announcing that they only awaited his arrival in person to make formal acknowledgment of his authority. On the first day of Ramdhan Sa‘ud arrived at the camp which had been prepared for him at ‘Ain Najm over against Hufuf, and there received the salutations of the inhabitants of the Hasa towns, who poured in in their thousands. He then devoted himself to the reorganisation of the administration. The leading representatives of dissent were banished from the country and everything that savoured of idol-worship or heresy was destroyed. Mosques were established and arrangements made for the teaching of the true principles of Islam; and to secure the observance of law and order it was decided to construct a fort outside Hufuf to dominate the town. This work was still in hand when Sa‘ud went north to deal with a Badawin concentration at Inta‘, but his back was no sooner turned than trouble occurred. A number of Hufuf notables, led by Muhammad ibn Sa‘dun and another member of the ‘Arai‘ar family and Muhaina ibn ‘Amran of the ‘Atban, gathered in the seclusion of the palm-groves of ‘Uyun to concoct a conspiracy for the overthrow of the Wahhabi régime, and the eighth day of Shawwal was selected for the *coup d'état*. The first attacks were launched at the Wahhabi officials, of whom the Governor of Hufuf and many of the new teachers were assassinated; and the conspirators, having posted detachments to protect them from attack on the flank or in the rear, proceeded to loot the town. The commander of the Wahhabi garrison, Muhammad ibn Ghushaiyan, was apprised of what was happening only by the sounds of firing and riot, and, realising the precarious situation of his troops in the old fort of the Kut, immediately decided to take refuge in the new building outside the town, where, although it was still incomplete, he would be secure from a surprise attack. The townsfolk launched a number of attacks at the walls, but made no impression on the defenders, while the latter surprised them by a vigorous sortie which put them to flight with considerable loss. So matters continued for many days, until the ammunition and provisions of the garrison began to fail. Hufuf and the neighbourhood were wholly in the hands of the rebels, and Ibn Ghushaiyan, finding himself unable to do anything to restore the situation and fearing that his supplies would run out before Sa‘ud could come to his rescue, decided to evacuate the fort and escape under cover of night. This he successfully accomplished, and, meeting on the way a friendly raiding party of the ‘Atban returning from the desert, he returned with it and attacked the revolted village of Sha‘ba, where he killed many of the enemy and took much booty. Meanwhile Sa‘ud had received the news of the disaster at Inta‘, and summoned a council of war to consider the situation; but the decision was to retire to Najd and to leave the Hasa rebellion to be dealt with on another occasion after due preparation.

So matters remained during the summer, which was marked by a raid conducted by Hujailan, the Governor of the Qasim, against the Bani ‘Amr section of the Harb, who had been active in the cause of Ghalib and raiding against the Wahhabi tribes. The autumn of 1793 found Sa‘ud back with his army on the northern outskirts of the Hasa, where the rebels had been joined by Zaid ibn Sa‘dun and his brothers, who had been residing in self-imposed exile at Kuwait. The first village attacked by the Wahhabis was Shuqaiq, where a sortie of the rebels, some 600 strong, was defeated with heavy loss. Those who escaped from the fight shut themselves up in the village, to which Sa‘ud laid siege while proceeding to destroy the surrounding palm-groves. Under cover of night the inhabitants abandoned their homes and scattered over the countryside, to rally again at the hamlet of Qarin. Here again they were besieged until they sued for peace, which was only granted on condition of the surrender of half the total assets of the community and of the banishment of the leading men. The rebels of Mubarraz, under various members of the ‘Arai‘ar family, now advanced to try conclusions with the Wahhabis in the open, but were put to flight, and Sa‘ud followed up this success by an assault on the town, maintained for three days. An attempt by the people of Hufuf to relieve their neighbours only resulted in a loss of sixty killed, while Zaid ibn Sa‘dun himself fled to "the villages of the East," namely Qatif and Jubail on the Gulf coast, whither a Wahhabi detachment pursued him, without, however, succeeding in an assault on the walls of Jubail. Meanwhile a battle was fought in the gardens of Battaliya, in which the rebels were defeated, and after which the Wahhabis proceeded to ravage the countryside so effectively that Barrak decided to throw himself on the mercy of Sa‘ud. The latter accepted the penitence of Hasa with due reserve, and demanded that the inhabitants should appear before him to make public profession of loyalty; but such a demand created consternation in their guilty consciences, and eventually Sa‘ud was content to accept an assurance that on his removal from the scene the people would take the oath of loyalty in the presence of Barrak as the representative of the Wahhabi ruler. Sa‘ud accordingly departed, but the rebels, relieved of immediate danger, refused to keep faith with Barrak, who now declared openly for the Wahhabi cause against his former confederates, and went out into the desert to organise an attack on them. Meanwhile a Wahhabi force concentrated under Saif ibn Sa‘dun at Jisha after a preliminary failure before the walls of Mubarraz, and the enemy gathered in force at the neighbouring hamlet of Jafar, under the leadership of Muhammad ibn ‘Arai‘ar. Fighting occurred daily between the two forces without any definite result, until Barrak contrived by treachery on the part of the inhabitants to effect an entry into Hufuf. With their base in the enemy's hands, Muhammad, with Duwaihis and other members of the ‘Arai‘ar family, fled to the coast, and the following day Mubarraz opened its gates to Barrak, who entered in triumph amid the acclamations of the populace, who once more swore allegiance to Islam and loyalty to the Wahhabi state. ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, on receiving from Barrak the news of these developments, wrote exhorting him to maintain the principles of the faith with the utmost rigour, and naming certain of the rebel leaders for perpetual banishment.

While these events were proceeding to their climax n April 1794, an important expedition was made by Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqal, with a following from the Washm, Qasim and Jabal Shammar provinces, against the most northerly group of the oases of Arabia beyond the Great North Nafud. The capital of this district was Daumat al Jandal, the modern Jauf, and it appears that all the villages submitted and joined the faith without much opposition, except only that of Sirah, which was attacked and plundered. Another expedition under Ibrahim ibn 'Affaisan reached Kuwait and brought away much booty after defeating a sortie of the inhabitants with a loss of thirty men killed. And the tale of the ubiquitous activities of the Wahhabis at this time is rounded off by a raid led by Hadi ibn Qarmala against the Buqum and Bani Hajir of the Hijaz frontier, whence they returned with 3000 camels as the spoils of victory.

The winter of 1794–95 was not spent in idleness, but was not marked by any campaign of importance. Sa'ud opened the raiding season with an attack on the Dhafir on the 'Iraq border and collected much booty. He then turned suddenly on the west and appeared before Turaba on the Hijaz frontier. A preliminary victory in the open was followed by the siege of the oasis; and daily fighting ensued, in the course of which the Wahhabis lost fifteen men killed, including Muhammad ibn Ghushaiyan, who had so recently distinguished himself in the Hasa. Sa'ud diverted the course of the Wadi to deprive the palm-groves of water during the flood season, but the inhabitants held out tenaciously, and in the end the Wahhabis withdrew, after cutting down a large area of palms. Meanwhile one Sa'd ibn Qatnam, a new but zealous convert to the new puritanism, had taken upon himself the vindication of his adopted creed in the Raniya district, where he built a fort to overawe the villages of the oasis. The villagers resorted to stratagem to counter this move, and appointed twelve of their number to make pretence of submission to Sa'd, who readily admitted them to the shelter of his fort. Having spent some days in studying the routine of the Wahhabi garrison they sent a message to the villagers to appear before the walls on a certain Friday, when the whole population of the fort would be at prayers. The plot succeeded perfectly; ropes were dropped over the walls by the conspirators within, and Sa'd and most of his garrison were killed, his eldest son being sent as a prisoner to the Sharif. The remainder of his family escaped to Dar'iya, where they were compensated for their losses by 'Abdul 'Aziz. The only other occurrence of note during this season was a raid on Qatar by Ibrahim ibn 'Affaisan, who brought back much spoil to sell in the Hasa.

Towards the end of 1795 Sharif Ghalib despatched a strong force under Sharif Fuhaid to attack Ibn Qarmala, who was encamped at the wells of Masal. Joined by the Badawin on the way, this force encircled the Wadi in which lay the wells and thus cut off the retreat of the Qahtan. A desperate struggle ensued, but Ibn Qarmala was outnumbered and could only make good his escape from the trap by leaving his camp in the enemy's hands. Meanwhile a Wahhabi success was being recorded by Qaid ibn Rubaiya', who raided the Bani Hajir and put them to flight with considerable loss of men and animals. But Ghalib was not long in following up his initial success against Ibn Qarmala, who was encamped at the wells of Jamaniya awaiting the reinforcements which 'Abdul 'Aziz was sending to him from every direction. Sharif Nasir ibn Yahya was in command of the Hijaz troops, which approached the enemy about February 1796. Meanwhile the loyal tribes of Western Najd had gathered in force to his standard, and Rubaiya‘ from the Wadi was hastening to his assistance. The battle was joined on the 1st Ramdhan, March 10th, and the Sharifian force was signally defeated, losing 300 killed, besides 30,000 camels and 200,000 sheep, which had to be abandoned to the enemy. Muhammad ibn Mu‘aiqal, who had also been sent by ‘Abdul ‘Aziz to reinforce Ibn Qarmala, arrived two days after the battle, and was able to take up the pursuit of the Bani Hajir, who were caught and defeated at Qunsuliya. The Wahhabi activities in the west at this time reached as far as Najran, where Mubarak ibn ‘Abdul Hadi of the Dawasir attacked and defeated a camp of the Hindi section of the Yam tribe.

While these events were happening in the west, news arrived at Dar‘iya that mischief was again brewing in the Hasa, where one Salih al Najjar was seeking to do injury to those who still remained loyal to the Wahhabi cause. ‘Abdul ‘Aziz wrote to Barrak exhorting him to abide by the terms of his covenant and to enforce the principles of Islam in the province. He was, however, helpless against the new movement, which began with an attack on the fort of ‘Ali ibn Ahmad, which was vigorously besieged. Sa‘ud, encamped at Shaqra, held a council of war, which decided on immediate intervention, and Ibrahim ibn ‘Affaisan was despatched with a force of 200 camel-men. The rebels redoubled their efforts to force the capitulation of the fort before the arrival of these reinforcements, but were defeated in an assault on the walls after effecting an entry into the fort itself. They then sent to the "villages of the East" for help, and meanwhile launched an attack on Mubarraz, where the chief of the ‘Atban, Muhawwis ibn Shuqair, was in command. This attack failed, and Salih, despairing of success, sued for peace, which was granted by Muhawwis. Meanwhile Ibn ʻAffaisan appeared on the scene, to find the Naʻathil and Rifaʻa quarters of Hufuf still actively in rebellion in spite of Salih's collapse. The arrival of the Wahhabi force took the rebels by surprise, and they were heavily defeated, some sixty persons, mostly of the Jubail district, being killed. Ibn ʻAffaisan now laid siege to ʻAmran, where the escaped rebels had taken refuge, and the latter surrendered on condition of being allowed to go to ʻUqair. The rising was by now crushed, and when Saʻud himself arrived in June the people of Hufuf flocked to his camp to make their submission and the villages of the East followed their example, while Mubarraz, which had kept aloof from the rising, renewed its covenant. The Hasa was once more back in the fold, and the Wahhabi fort was now completed, armed and provisioned to act as an effective check on any future ebullition of hostile feeling. The people were, moreover, called upon to surrender all arms in their possession; the walls and bastions of the towns and villages were demolished; mosques and schools were re-established and the whole administration was once more reorganised. It was not till late in the year that Saʻud returned to Darʻiya, where his father had arranged a striking public reception in honour of his victories in the Wahhabi cause and of the final subjugation of the Hasa.

The late summer and autumn of 1796 were marked by the rare phenomenon of devastating floods throughout the districts of Central Arabia. As the result of a cloud-burst or heavy rain on the Tuwaiq plateau the flood poured down Wadi Hanifa. "The waters increased, and the people were terrified at the ushing of the flood, which as it grew in volume eached and felled many shops in the Suq and some of the houses of the capital. And many palms were uprooted in the valley and carried away, causing great loss to the peasants." Even at Dilam the visitation was serious, as the Sha'ib 'Ajmaniya flooded the ower levels and played havoc with the stored merchandise of the shopkeepers. At Huraimala there was a hailstorm unprecedented for severity in the memory of the oldest inhabitants, killing animals, destroying palm trees and even damaging the walls of the town. A considerable part of Hauta, in the south, was destroyed, and 'Ayaina suffered heavily, the reaped crops being utterly ruined. "Thus did the people of many districts suffer until, in answer to their prayers, the visitation ended by the grace of God, but with it came a blessing in turn, for Wadi Hanifa flowed for a whole year though it rained not, and the country prospered with bounteous crops." This prosperity was, however, balanced by an unprecedented visitation of locusts, which caused widespread damage until they had passed through the appointed stages of their development and, finding the land once more returned to its normal poverty, marshalled their terrible battalions for an assault on the better-favoured lands of the north. The study of locust visitations is still in its infancy in the twentieth century, and it may be suggested that the experience of Najd at the end of the eighteenth century provides a useful clue. Life in the desert has perhaps developed the faculty of remaining latent for long periods at a time, until climatic conditions produce the sustenance necessary to tempt it into activity, while the migrations of the creatures thus brought to life follow naturally upon the exhaustion of such sustenance, which is rapid enough under the normal conditions of the desert. The locust is essentially a product of the desert, where, like the equally erratic truffle, it is eaten with relish by the Badawin. An organised commercial demand in the markets of Europe for dead locusts at so much per ton might perhaps solve the problem of their import on the wing, which requires no organisation.

The growing dissatisfaction of the people of Basra and its neighbourhood at the so-called menace of the Wahhabis, which was in fact more provoked than provoking, culminated in the presentation of a monster petition to the Pasha of Baghdad for the conferment of wide powers on the head of the Muntafiq. Thuwaini was accordingly nominated to the governorship of the Basra province and sworn to unremitting efforts to stamp out the Wahhabi heresy in the desert. On his return to Basra in his new capacity he was accorded a vociferous welcome by the citizens of the town and the tribal elements, while a poem of exultation at the new development by Ibn Firuz seemed to express the universal satisfaction of the province at the events foreshadowed by his appointment. A force of enormous proportions was immediately collected and provided with artillery and all other necessaries; and in due course the march began. The Dhafir tribe joined the army in full strength as it advanced towards the Hasa, where the Wahhabi cause appeared most vulnerable; and other Badawin elements of the ‘Iraq border lost no time in throwing in their lot with an enterprise which seemed to promise rich rewards in spoil. News of the advance of Thuwaini arrived at Dar‘iya, and ‘Abdul ‘Aziz braced himself for the struggle with the usual prayers to the Almighty for His favour on the operations of His faithful. "O Thou who heareth the prayers of the fearful and disappointeth not the hopeful, turn away from us the evil of the wicked and unbelieving;

visit Thy wrath on the sinful and scatter their mighty hosts." The order went forth for a full muster from every province, and Sa'ud was despatched with the nucleus of the army to meet the enemy. The Hasa contingent was ready in January 1797, and the Najd orces in February. Sa'ud camped with the main body at Hafar al 'Ataj, west of the Dahna, and sent Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqal ahead to form a concentraion in the Summan, where Thuwaini was reported to be in the neighbourhood of the two Qariyas. In addiion to these dispositions, Hasan ibn Mishari was sent down to the wells of Umm Rabi' to make contact with the Hasa troops, and Barrak was ordered to oin him with all speed. Meanwhile Thuwaini was aiming at detaching Hasa from the Wahhabi cause, and the Bani Khalid of the north were sent down to use their influence with Barrak. The latter seems to have been frightened into making terms with the Muntafiq leader, whom he went to meet, while many members of his family departed in disgust to join he Wahhabis at Dar'iya. Barrak had, however, no ooner reached Thuwaini than the latter's assassinaion by a slave threw his army into a state of panic. Barrak immediately left his new allies and sent word of the disaster that had befallen them to Sa'ud. A Wahhabi attack was now made on the enemy conentration, but the Muntafiq and Dhafir under Thuwaini's brother, Nasir, stood their ground for a while, hough their position was too hopeless to be mainained in the absence of a resourceful leader. The rder was given to retreat, and the guns and other mpedimenta were left behind to facilitate rapidity f movement. These fell into the hands of the Wahabis, who, under Ibn Mishari, took up the pursuit nd engaged the enemy at Jahra and Subaihiya to complete their discomfiture. Sa'ud followed his victorious troops to Subaihiya, where he camped for some weeks, presiding over the division of the spoil, which consisted of 3000 camels and 100,000 sheep, and watching for any sign of the rallying of the enemy. He then marched down to the Hasa, and remained for some time at Mubarraz, taking stock of the results of the administrative reorganisation which he had introduced the previous year.

Meanwhile Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqal was sent to make the first recorded Wahhabi expedition overseas against the island of Jazirat al 'Amair, off the Hasa coast. The unsuspecting islanders were completely taken by surprise, and fled on the appearance of the Wahhabis, leaving all their possessions to the invaders, who carried away a goodly booty, including six pedigree mares and forty female slaves, who were presumably part of the stock-in-trade of the inhabitants. At the same time the Ma'adin shepherds of the 'Iraq border were raided by Farraj, a chieftain of the Subai', and the Harb tribe on the Hijaz frontier was attacked by a Wahhabi force. And further to the south Rubaiya' was active raiding the Shahran tribe of the 'Asir border and attacking Bisha, whose villages, after some resistance, surrendered and subscribed to the Wahhabi creed. This exploit was followed by a visit to Raniya, whose inhabitants, seeing Rubaiya' settling down to the building of a fort, likewise made their submission.

The renewed activity and persistence of the Wahhabis in the west seems to have influenced Sharif Ghalib to make another attempt at accommodation with 'Abdul 'Aziz, to whom he sent a letter inviting him to send a representative by return to expound the principles of the faith once more at Mecca. The person selected for this mission—it is remarkable that it never occurred to 'Abdul 'Aziz to decline the invitaion—was a layman of one of the leading families of Najd, Hamad ibn Nasir ibn Mu‘ammar of ‘Ayaina. On arrival at Mecca he and his party performed the customary religious rites and presented themselves before Ghalib with the gifts sent by the Wahhabi ruler. Their reception was extremely cordial, and many hours and days were spent in conversations about the details of Wahhabi precepts and practices, but no result seems to have been achieved in the discussions except that a written questionnaire was submitted to Hamad with a request for written replies to the points set forth. There were two main points to be dealt with, but on both the Wahhabi position was uncompromisingly at variance with the traditional practice of the Islamic Capital. Calling upon the prophets and saints for their favour or intercession with the Almighty had become a commonplace of Meccan routine, and the graves of the favourite intermediaries were piously maintained for the benefit of he pilgrims and the profit of their guides. The invocation of God, replied the Wahhabi representative, nvolves a recognition of the majesty before which we rightly bow down and worship. Worship includes nvocation; invocation connotes worship. Therefore t was evident that the invocation of prophets and saints implied the rendering of divine honours to others than God alone. This was sheer polytheism, and therefore infidelity. The Wahhabis condemned it unconditionally. The next question related to the necessity of prayer and other obligations of the Islamic code. In Mecca apparently some laxity had grown up in these matters, and the point was now pecifically raised whether one who repeated the formula, "There is no god but God alone, and Muhammad s the Prophet of God," but omitted to say his prayers or to fast or to give alms, could be regarded as a

Muslim and therefore immune from persecution. On this point the Wahhabi deputy admitted that some difference existed in the preaching of the four orthodox schools, and that the Hanafi and Shafi'i codes did not press the excommunication of those who professed Islam according to the recognised formula but from laziness or neglect omitted to perform the services required of the Muslim congregation. This point of view, however, had not commended itself to Ahmad ibn Hanbal, whose doctrines were the foundation of the Wahhabi creed, and his case was supported by numerous quotations from the Quran and the Traditions, which made it clear that to be a Muslim one must not only pronounce the formula already referred to, but also pray (and particularly attend the weekly Friday congregational prayer) and fast during Ramdhan and give alms. On this point, therefore, the Wahhabis admitted no laxity, and were prepared to undertake the obligation of *Jíhad* against all who thought and acted otherwise.

As has been already indicated, the discussions proved barren, and the parties reverted to their previous state of thinly veiled hostility, which would sooner or later precipitate war. In fact, no sooner had the Wahhabi deputation departed than Ghalib, taking advantage of the preoccupations of the Wahhabi ruler in the east and the absence of large numbers of the Badawin with his standard, sent 'Uthman al Madhaifi, the Governor of Taif, with an army to attack the Qahtan, who were encamped at the wells of 'Aqailan al Rawaq under Misfir ibn Nuqaihan. The Sharifian force met with unexpected resistance from the tribesmen, and lost fifty of its numbers before it beat a retreat, to incur further losses from thirst in the desert. Ghalib, however, was not deterred from another effort, and, as Bisha had recently made submission to Rubaiya‘, sent Sharif Fuhaid to re-establish his authority. This was easily enough accomplished after a threat that resistance would be followed by the destruction of the palm-groves. Fuhaid thereupon put many of the Wahhabi inhabitants to death and turned his attention to Raniya, where he was engaged in cutting down the palms when the people made a sudden sortie and routed his troops with great loss. Fuhaid fled back to the Hijaz, while Ibn Qarmala followed him up and attacked the Buqum tribe with some success. In spite, however, of a repetition of this attack two months later, the Buqum remained steadfast in their loyalty to the Sharif, and were the only tribe of importance along the western frontier of Najd that held aloof from a movement started during this year for a general acceptance of Wahhabism by the Badawin. Hamud ibn Rubai‘an, paramount chief of the ‘Ataiba, headed the deputation which was sent to negotiate the matter with ‘Abdul ‘Aziz and to make formal application for the admission of the western tribes to the peace and security of the true faith. Such a demand could not, of course, be refused, but ‘Abdul ‘Aziz knew the Badawin well enough to demand guarantees of their honesty. They had for years done his cause much damage, and it was only fair that they should to some extent make good that damage before admission into the fold. A cash indemnity calculated at a fixed sum for every tent and an indemnity in kind consisting of a certain number of camels and rifles for every sectional unit of the tribes concerned were readily paid; and thus the western Badawin passed under Wahhabi rule, much to the distress of Ghalib, who, abandoned by all except the Buqum, realised that his position and influence were doomed unless he immediately took the initiative to bring the tribes back to heel. A force sent out by him with this end in view encountered the scouts of Ibn Qarmala wandering in the desert, and, having captured them, forced them to guide them to the Qahtan encampment. Ibn Qarmala was taken by surprise, and had only thirteen horsemen ready for action. With these, however, he boldly met the charge of the Sharifian cavalry, and after a hot fight the latter withdrew, leaving some of their baggage-animals in the hands of the tribesmen. Ghalib now took up a position at Qunsuliya to watch events, but was soon on the move again towards Raniya, where Ibn Qarmala had concentrated his forces. For several days a desultory exchange of attacks was kept up, while Ghalib devoted his energies to the destruction of the outlying palm-groves, until, having lost 100 men without achieving any substantial gain, he decided to withdraw before the reinforcements despatched from the Qasim and Wadi Dawasir could come up to turn the tables on him. A short time afterwards we find him attacking Bisha at the invitation of a part of the populace disgruntled by the Wahhabi régime. The inhabitants temporarily evacuated their villages and fled to Raniya, but while Ghalib was busy destroying their homes and crops, Ibn Qarmala suddenly appeared on the scene with his new reinforcements. And the Arab historian as suddenly brings his detailed chronicle of events to an end in the middle of the battle which ensued and resulted, as we may infer, in the discomfiture and withdrawal of Ghalib.

Wahhabi authority was thus vindicated in the west pending the greater events now close at hand. Sa‘ud was actively consolidating the position in the northern provinces. And in the east the spring of 1798 witnessed the efforts of Sulaiman Pasha to restore a position jeopardised by the death of Thuwaini and the dispersal of his army. Hamud ibn Thamir was appointed chief of the Muntafiq and Governor of Basra to rally the scattered tribes, but the initiative was with the Wahhabis, who raided Kuwait with partial success, and even penetrated into the Za'b territory on the banks of the Shatt al Arab. Wahhabi Arabia, triumphantly consolidated within, was on the threshold of empire, while its neighbours, thoroughly nettled by its religious pretensions, had scarcely begun to realise the necessity for alarm. The Ottoman yoke rested loosely on the northern borderlands, which regarded the Arabian menace rather as a nuisance than as a danger. The "Butcher" still ruled his little strip of Palestine and Syria with mediæval ferocity and efficiency. In Egypt the Mamelukes lorded it under the nebulous sovereignty of the Sublime Porte. And the fringes of Arabia, west, south and east, supported a series of petty states enjoying more or less independence *de jure*, together with a *de facto* freedom conceded by stronger neighbours who were too busy to be bothered with them for the time being. But the storm was very near which would profoundly affect the destinies of all these states, from the mighty Porte itself to the lowly barony of Kuwait, and it would come from the west. Pursued by Nelson, Napoleon was already on the way to Egypt, and the siege of little Acre would make more noise in the world than the collapse of Islam's most sacred shrines under the zealous iconoclasm of the fanatical Wahhabis. Wahhabi power would reach its imperial zenith almost unobserved, except by its nearest neighbours, and Europe would be more interested in its sudden and sensational collapse. Great Britain was nearly ready to show her hand in a policy of frigid neutrality and veiled hostility which would become the traditional attitude of her Foreign Office towards the only movement that has ever shown signs of any capacity to regenerate Arabia. She thus missed a chance which was to come once more, only to be once more rejected. Tradition dies hard.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST WAHHABI EMPIRE

The collapse of Thuwaini's expedition into the Hasa in 1797 had encouraged a serious ebullition of Wahhabi activity all along the 'Iraq frontier as far north as Queen Zubaida's pilgrim road. The environs of Basra were raided and the shepherd tribes of the Euphrates littoral felt the heavy hand of the fanatics, who only turned back to their own country when their accumulations of booty had begun to make movement difficult. Sulaiman Pasha was, however, not to be deterred from his dream of reducing the Wahhabi movement to impotence, and a new army was hastily prepared and sent, under the command of 'Ali Pasha, by sea and land to invade the Hasa. The Turkish troops were joined by the inhabitants of Qatif and by important elements of the oasis population of the Hasa, but the forts of the chief towns were held by strong and well-equipped Wahhabi garrisons, and 'Ali Pasha, being unable to make any impression on them, and being, it is said, induced by less proper considerations, decided to withdraw. Nothing had been achieved, and the Wahhabi position was left stronger than before, with the added prestige of a successful resistance to the regular forces of the Sublime Porte.

There was now no holding the Wahhabis, whose influence had already begun to extend towards Oman, which had recently emerged from a disturbing period of internecine struggles between various claimants for the executive power. Ahmad ibn Sa'id, an able and ambitious merchant who for some years had acted as adviser and chief Minister to Saif ibn Sultan, the last Imam of the Ya'riba dynasty, had ejected the Persian garrisons from the country in 1741, after the capture of Masqat by a ruse which he followed up with a holocaust of its defenders at a banquet given in their honour. Proclaimed Imam and destined to be the founder of a dynasty which has retained the chief power until our own times, he showed himself an able and active administrator, thoroughly reorganised the army on a permanent basis, strengthened the fortifications of the inland capital of Rastaq, and generally laid the foundations of an enduring régime. Incidentally he replaced the nominal principle of elective succession to the Imamate by that of primogeniture in his own house, and on his death in 1775 he had been succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Sa'id, whose elder brother, Hilal, had died in India while undergoing a cure for blindness. Sa'id was acknowledged as ruler by the whole country, and took up his residence at Rastaq, to the neglect of Masqat, which was rapidly becoming the most important place in the country. Sa'id, the last of his line to hold the title of Imam, as his successors adopted that of Saiyid and, later, Sultan, appears to have been completely incompetent for his task, but two attempts to set up his brother, Qais, in his place failed, and it was his son, Hamid, who, with his headquarters at Masqat, exercised the executive authority of the realm. Under him Oman appears to have enjoyed a respite from troubles, but on his death in 1792, his father resumed the reins of active power, only to provoke serious disturbances and a struggle for supremacy between his brother, his son, and his nephew. The brother, Sultan, emerged master of the situation, and having captured Masqat, Matrah nd Barqa on the coast, declared his independence f Sa'id, the nominal Imam, who remained at Rastaq. aiyid Sultan, as he styled himself, immediately emarked on a career of expansion, and took Bandar ‛Abbas and other places on the Persian coast. It was t this point that Oman began to feel the influence f the Wahhabi movement, which not only made ome headway among the tribes of the interior, but ⁄as also adopted by the Qawasim pirates of the Gulf oast, who now redoubled their activities under the anction of the green flag. Native vessels were atacked and their crews given the choice between onformity and instant death; but matters became ıore serious when a British ship, the *Bassein*, was aptured and detained for some days at Ras al Khaima, while the brig *Viper* was unsuccessfully ttacked near Bushire. These events occurred in 1797, ut the British Government was at the moment too usy to attend to them. In connection with the ctivities of Napoleon and his supposed designs on he British position in India, French intrigue was eginning to make itself felt at Masqat, where British nterests were represented only by a native broker. t the same time important changes in Persia, where he Qajar dynasty had just established itself in superession of the Zand, were attracting the attention of he European rivals to the Persian Gulf, whose orthern shore was believed to find favour with Napoleon as a possible route to the East. British iplomacy got busy, and a Persian notable, Mahdi Ali Khan, who represented the Bombay Government t Bushire, was instructed to ascertain the attitude f the ruler of Oman towards the French and to peruade him to avoid contact with them. Saiyid Sultan eadily agreed to a treaty with Great Britain in 1798, y which he undertook to refuse any foothold to the

French or Dutch, to dismiss all French employees in his service, and to exclude French vessels from his ports. He further agreed to permit the construction of a British fort and factory at Bandar 'Abbas, but he declined to extend the same facilities to them at Masqat or to receive a British political agent there. This latter objection was, however, waived in the following year, when Sir John Malcolm, on his way to the Persian Court, landed at Masqat to discuss matters with Saiyid Sultan; and Surgeon Bogle immediately became the first British political agent at that port. The only other development on the Arabian shore of the Gulf which deserves a passing notice at this stage is the occupation of the islands of Bahrain in 1783 by the 'Atban Arabs, whom we have already met in the Hasa gradually succumbing to Wahhabi influence. They had a colony at Zubara, on the Qatar promontory, whence, with the assistance of the Sabah family, they descended on and seized the islands from the Persian garrisons which had held them since 1753 by conquest from the Hawala Arabs. The leading family of the 'Atban was the Khalifa, which still rules the islands under British protection. These same 'Atban had, about the middle of the eighteenth century or earlier, established a settlement at Qurain, which from the fort they built came to be better known as Kuwait, and which now began to become prosperous owing to its blood-connection with Bahrain. The Sabah family, which was responsible for this settlement, has retained the chief power at Kuwait ever since.

The activities of the Wahhabis on the 'Iraq frontier and the consequent ban on the pilgrimage were a serious matter for the Hijaz; and Ghalib, hopeless of restoring the position by force of arms, resolved to treat with 'Abdul 'Aziz. An accommodation was easily arrived at to the common advantage of both parties, and while Ghalib unreservedly admitted the orthodoxy of the Arabian heresy, the Wahhabi ruler accepted a territorial demarcation between the two States, which left the country of the ‘Ataiba and Harb as well as the northern part of ‘Asir to the Sharif. The new accord was celebrated by the passage of a great pilgrim-caravan across Najd, under the personal escort of Sa‘ud, in 1799; and the striking success of the new arrangements resulted in their repetition the following year, when the ruler of Oman also attended the pilgrimage ceremonies, and thus made the acquaintance of the Wahhabi ruler’s son and heir. The returning pilgrims were, however, attacked and robbed by the ‘Iraq tribes, who doubtless had instructions from headquarters to discredit the Wahhabi arrangements for the escort of the pilgrim caravans; and although this appears to have happened after the Wahhabi authorities had said farewell to their charges, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz imposed on himself a moral obligation to avenge those who had suffered for being his guests. Raiding-parties were accordingly launched once more against the Euphrates districts, and in April 1801 the city and shrine of Karbala were carried by assault and sacked. A general massacre of the inhabitants was followed by the removal of all the treasures accumulated in the vaults of the tomb of Husain, which was itself desecrated and partly destroyed. Sa‘ud, who was himself in command, retired by way of ‘Ukhaidhar with his wonderful booty, and after harrying the country between Karbala and Basra, returned to Dar‘iya to celebrate a triumph which caused as much satisfaction among the faithful of Najd as it created resentment and serious alarm in the Muslim world at large and particularly in Persia. Meanwhile a Wahhabi army under a Nubian slave, Hariq, was actively engaged in reducing the inland districts of Oman, which had received in advance a summons to adhere to the new faith. The Oman tribes made rapid submission, and the Dhahira district was occupied without difficulty, to become the base for further operations against the coastal tracts. Sultan on his return from Mecca thus found his realm exposed to a serious danger, and immediately summoned a council of war, which decided to make a supreme effort to resist the invaders. The tribes rose at this summons, and Hariq deemed it wise to make good his retreat before his small force was overwhelmed. Buraima was, however, retained as a Wahhabi outpost on the Oman frontier, and Wahhabi influence continued all along the pirate coast.

Soon after Sa'ud's second pilgrimage the treaty between his father and Ghalib was flagrantly violated by a Wahhabi occupation of Hali, on the Red Sea coast, and an attack on the Shahran tribe of the 'Asir uplands. The Sharif sent 'Uthman al Madhaifi to demand satisfaction for this affront and injury, but the envoy turned Wahhabi, and only came back to deliver from a safe distance his new master's ultimatum to his former sovereign. Ghalib was to abdicate his position in favour of his brother, 'Abdul Mu'in, who had latterly sought an asylum at Dar'iya, on pain of an immediate declaration of war. Such terms Ghalib was scarcely expected to accept, and Sa'ud advanced to take early advantage of his anticipated refusal. The Sharifian garrison of Taif was utterly defeated and the town was occupied without difficulty, while the Wahhabis scattered in all directions to harry the countryside. It so happened that the Damascus pilgrim-caravan, under the Governor, 'Abdullah Pasha, had at this moment arrived within a three days' march of Taif. A small Wahhabi raiding-party held it up demanding payment for the right of passage, but 'Abdullah Pasha brushed it aside and continued his march to Mecca, not, however, without sending a conciliatory message to Sa'ud, who replied granting a truce of three days for the performance of the pilgrimage rites on the condition of the caravan's immediate departure thereafter. Ghalib, finding his situation exceedingly precarious, begged 'Abdullah Pasha to intercede with Sa'ud for a peaceful solution of their quarrel; but the latter absolutely declined to admit any right of intercession, and the Pasha, deeming it unwise to identify himself further with an apparently losing cause, made all haste to get his caravan away from the danger zone. The pilgrimage over, Ghalib retired to Jidda to seek the protection of its new fortifications and its Turkish garrison under the Wali, Sharif Pasha. Sa'ud entered Mecca without opposition in April, 1803, and, having installed 'Abdul Mu'in as Amir, proceeded to free the holy city of some of the weeds of heresy. The Ka'ba was stripped of its rich coverings and the treasures of the great mosque were appropriated to the victors. Tombs were destroyed and other places of visitation were obliterated, while a number of ecclesiastics suspected of obdurate loyalty to the old order were executed. Sa'ud then marched on Jidda, which resisted his vigorous assaults on the walls until his army was decimated by plague. An attempt on Madina also failed, and Sa'ud decided to abandon the Hijaz, where the people rose and massacred the small garrison of 200 men he had left in Mecca, while Ghalib resumed his post. He found as little difficulty in recovering Taif, Qunfidha and Hali as he had experienced before in losing them, while towards the end of the year news arrived at Mecca which would have led many besides Ghalib to think that the Wahhabi menace was over for ever.

On November 4th, 1803, the aged ‘Abdul ‘Aziz had taken his accustomed place as Imam in front of the serried rows of worshippers at the afternoon prayer in the mosque of Turaif at Dar‘iya, when suddenly he fell forward mortally wounded by an assassin’s dagger. The murderer was a Shi‘ite of Persian nationality, who had seen his children butchered by the Wahhabis at Karbala and had sworn to be avenged. For that purpose he had repaired to Dar‘iya professing to be a convert to Wahhabism, and for more than a year he had watched for an opportunity of accomplishing his object. By pious conduct he had been able to insinuate himself into the front row of worshippers, and more than earned both his revenge and the terrible death which overtook him on the spot. He was seized and burned alive, though it is reported that his head had to be cut off, as the flames refused to consume his body ! The Turkish and Persian Governments had been deterred by their preoccupations with internal troubles from their original purpose of organising expeditions to exact reparation for the desecration of Karbala, but this humble subject of one of those Governments had consecrated his life to that purpose, and had visited the wrath of God on the head of the Wahhabi ruler. Even his name is not recorded, but his pious act is immortalised in the annals of the faction of ‘Ali. Thus was Karbala avenged.

Born in 1721, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz had first come into prominence in the early campaigns of his father’s reign, and had led the Wahhabi armies in every important fight until he himself ascended the throne at the age of forty-four. From that time he had watched and guided the operations of his eldest son, whom he had appointed to the chief military command, and during the four decades that followed he had seen his arms carried triumphantly through the length and breadth of Arabia. Only once had he hesitated in the course he had set himself to steer, and that was when the old Shaikh had had to overcome his scruples about throwing down the gauntlet to Thuwaini, the chief of the powerful Muntafiq. He had lived long enough to see the firstfruits of that action in the victories at Karbala and Mecca, and to see the little barony of Dar'iya expand into the semblance of an empire. His father had sown the seed, and he had faithfully laboured it to grow; his son would reap the harvest and his grandson would scatter it to the winds. Thus at the age of eighty-two did 'Abdul 'Aziz fall at the very threshold of the empire which he had built up brick by brick from the foundation with a tireless energy and pertinacity which deserve the applause of posterity.

Sa'ud, already recognised as heir-apparent, ascended the vacant throne, and lost little time in showing that his reign would be one of intensive activity. He was already fifty-seven years of age, and had been campaigning actively for some thirty-four years, since his first independent command of the expedition to Zilfi in 1769; but he was full of zeal and vigour, and in his son 'Abdullah he had a capable substitute for the command of forays he could not lead himself. These raids ranged over a vast area, and during the winter of 1803–4 we find 'Abdullah capturing Khaibar on the Hijaz frontier, reducing the northern Hijaz tribes to submission, and harrying the marches of Oman. Bahrain was also occupied, and the whole coast up to the pirate stronghold of Ras al Khaima was effectively under Wahhabi control and inspiration. The pirates, under their leader, Sultan ibn Saqar, became ever bolder, while and because the naval vessels of the British Government had been warned against taking the initiative, for fear of far-reaching complications. And another pirate group under Rahma ibn Jabir of the Kuwait district became at this time closely associated with the Wahhabis, particularly in connection with the capture of Bahrain.

The Pasha of Baghdad was by now thoroughly roused, and Saiyid Sultan, who in 1803 had rejected the advances of a French diplomatic mission for fear of offending British susceptibilities, began to look to Turkey for salvation from the Wahhabi menace to his territories. He actually proceeded to Basra with a fleet of fifteen war-vessels to take part in the expedition which was being prepared by 'Ali Pasha, to whom had been entrusted the supreme concert of all operations for a simultaneous assault on Najd and its dependencies from every direction. 'Abdullah Pasha of Damascus and Sharif Pasha at Jidda had both been instructed to hold themselves and their troops at his disposal. A large army of Kurds and Arabs was recruited in 'Iraq, but the Pasha's preparations were too ponderous to be rapid and effective. Many sympathisers were alienated by the long delay, and Saiyid Sultan weighed anchor in disgust to return home, but off the Qatar coast he fell in with pirates, and was himself killed in the course of a desperate struggle. The Wahhabis meanwhile ravaged the environs of Basra, which were weakly defended by the Muntafiq tribesmen, and even hovered round the outskirts of the monster camp which 'Ali Pasha had pitched at Hilla in preparation for the offensive. This was never destined to materialise, as, after five months of vain bustle, the Pasha's attention was claimed by a revolt in Kurdistan and the expedition against the Wahhabis was cancelled.

Sa‘ud, relieved of all anxiety in the direction of ‘Iraq, and acknowledged as suzerain of Oman by Badr, who had for the time being succeeded Sultan in authority, was now able to turn his attention seriously to the Hijaz, where once more he experienced little difficulty in recovering the position he had before won and lost so easily. ‘Uthman al Madhaifi reoccupied Taif for the Wahhabis, and, having successfully negotiated in the Wahhabi interest with the Harb tribe which commanded all the routes between the holy cities and the coast, became master of Yanbu‘ in 1804. Madina was thus left in the air and in danger of starvation. Ghalib, unable to help the city from Jidda, appealed to Damascus for a demonstration from the north, but ‘Abdullah Pasha acted in a dilatory manner, and Madina capitulated towards the end of the year. Meanwhile Abu Nuqta, a chief of the ‘Asir province, had made common cause with the Wahhabis, and organised an army for the occupation of the Tihama with such success that within a few months he held all the coast from Qunfidha to Mukha, then the chief port of the Yaman. In the autumn the Wahhabis advanced on Mecca, which Ghalib had placed in a state of defence; nevertheless he attempted to negotiate with Sa‘ud, who merely replied with threats of vengeance. In spite of desertions and sickness among his troops, Ghalib resisted stoutly, and his cause was supported by a revolt at Madina. But there was little chance of saving the state, and Mecca surrendered in February 1806. The holy city was delivered over to pillage for some days, and Madina suffered like treatment. The Sharifian régime was at an end, and Sa‘ud, having called off his soldiery and set up a semblance of regular administration in both cities as well as at Jidda, which had been surrendered by Ghalib to obviate further bloodshed, offered the governorship to his old enemy.

The tenets and practices of Wahhabism were rigorously enforced in the Hijaz, both on people and pilgrims; visitations to tombs and other historic sites were forbidden; wine, women and song were suppressed; even the use of tobacco was "discouraged"; it is said also that coffee, the only but frequent stimulant of the modern Wahhabi, found no favour in the eyes of his ancestors. The outward and visible signs of foreign suzerainty, such as the annual Mahmal from Syria and Egypt, were denied admittance to the Hijaz. Sa'ud was the "servant of the two holy cities," and thus the true successor of the Prophet, whose creed he would uncompromisingly enforce in all its pristine purity. He may have had visions of assuming the titular dignity hitherto vested in the Ottoman Calif-Sultan, and of leading the Islamic world back to the true doctrines of its faith. If so he never exposed the existence of such ambitions to a public which nevertheless suspected them. It was sufficient for him that he was in very sooth the ruler of an empire which embraced the whole of Arabia, though in some of its outlying portions his authority could scarcely have been anything but shadowy. On the other hand, his system—the Wahhabi system—was everywhere dominant, and other systems only maintained themselves silently on sufferance. He claimed no titular dignity to match the reality of his temporal power. Like his father and his grandfather before him, he was, and remained, the Imam of the Muslim congregation, the leader of the true believers in the service of their God.

But the conquest of the Hijaz was by no means the end of Sa'ud's military activities. In April 1806

'Abdullah made a night attack on the Shia' holy city of Najaf, and the Wahhabi scaling-party was already swarming up the ladders laid against the walls when the sentinels were awakened by the loud exhortations of the Wahhabi leader to his men. The assault failed, but Samawa and Zubair were raided on the way home; and Wahhabi raids reached during this year as far as Aleppo and the Syrian frontier, whose towns and villages as far south as Ma'an had by the spring of 1808 made their peace with the invaders on the condition of paying an annual tribute. In 1807 the settlements and tribes of the middle Euphrates were attacked and plundered; and throughout 1808 pressure was kept up along the 'Iraq frontier, with varying results, but without any permanent gain. In the same year the Wahhabis, coming up from Jauf and Wadi Sirhan, appeared before Damascus with a summons to the people to accept the faith on pain of massacre. The Governor, Yusuf Pasha Ganj, played for time, and, pretending conversion, negotiated with the enemy leader for safe conduct for the pilgrim-caravan which was ready to start for Mecca. Trouble arose between the Wahhabis and the pilgrims at Muzairib, and the caravan was looted and sent back to Damascus, which by this time had been fortified to stand a siege. Unable to effect an entry, the Wahhabis contented themselves with pillaging the Ghuta, and then withdrew homeward. Further raids on 'Iraq resulted in a reverse at Karbala, where Sulaiman Pasha, the successor of 'Ali Pasha at Baghdad, had concentrated a strong garrison. On the way southwards the Wahhabis pillaged various places, but were twice severely defeated by the Muntafiq at Samawa and Suq al Shuyukh. They were able, however, to appropriate the gathered date crop of the Basra district before scattering to their homes.

Sa‘ud now had good reason to anticipate that the Turks would make a special effort to avenge the many humiliations they had suffered at his hands. He therefore set himself to conciliate those whom he imagined to be not altogether sorry to see the Ottoman Empire in difficulties. To win Persian neutrality or benevolence in the coming conflict he arranged for the safe conduct of the Persian pilgrim-caravan of 1808 across his territories; the pilgrims, well treated at Mecca and immune from all Badawin attentions on the way there and back, were delighted with the new régime, and carried back a letter to Fath ‘Ali Shah from the Wahhabi Prince, in which merit was duly claimed for the services rendered to his subjects. Meanwhile the position in Oman had undergone a change which could not have been altogether palatable to Sa‘ud. The desert outpost of Buraima was still securely in Wahhabi hands, and the prestige of Sa‘ud was still at its zenith along the coast, but the British authorities were becoming inconveniently active in the suppression of piracy, which was being carried on under the more or less open auspices of the Wahhabi power. And Badr, the chief supporter of the cause in Oman, was finding his position increasingly difficult in face of the opposition of Salim and Sa‘id, the sons of Sultan, who exercised a joint rule at Masqat and on the coast, while the interior was in a state of chaos. In 1804 Sa‘id sent his brother to Fath ‘Ali Shah to engage his co-operation in the task of restoring order. He returned with a force of 3000 men, to be paid for from the Oman treasury, to Barqa, where those reinforcements had scarcely been landed when a Wahhabi fleet appeared from Bahrain. A naval engagement ensued and lasted three days, after which the Wahhabi ships withdrew to continue their campaign of pillage along the coast to Masqat.

Sa‘id now entered into negotiations with the East India Company, with the result that in 1806 a number of vessels were sent to co-operate with the Oman fleet in a blockade of the pirate coast. The Qawasim leaders were thus compelled to sue for peace, and an agreement was signed at Bandar ‘Abbas, by which the pirates undertook to surrender all captured ships and to respect the flag and property of the Company. The agreement was temporarily observed owing to the presence of British ships in the Gulf, but in 1808 there was a serious recrudescence of piracy almost under the direct auspices of the Wahhabi ruler, whose authority was formally recognised along the coast and who had replaced the semi-independent pirate chieftain, Ibn Saqar, by his cousin Husain ibn ‘Ali, who, as viceroy of the coast regions, had definite orders to attack all shipping and to reserve one-fifth of all booty taken for the benefit of the central treasury. Several British ships were accordingly attacked, and a demand was even made for the payment of tribute by the Bombay Government for the right of passage of its ships. The combined fleet of the Wahhabi state and its Qawasim allies now numbered some seventy vessels, each accommodating from eighty to a hundred men. Meanwhile Badr had been murdered in 1807, and the supreme power was usurped by Sa‘id to the exclusion of Salim, who had never been more than a cypher or a subordinate; and the change of régime in Oman was immediately felt in the capture of Bahrain by the new ruler. He was unable, however, to maintain his position in the islands, which were recovered the following year by the ‘Atban with Wahhabi assistance, and subjected to a massacre of the Shi‘ite element of the population. At the same time Sa‘id was threatened by a Wahhabi invasion on the land side of his own territories, and in his trouble he appealed to India. In September 1809 the Bombay Government sent a fleet to support his authority and prestige, and to exterminate the pirate gangs of the Qawasim, but a political officer was sent with the fleet to convey a conciliatory message to Sa‘ud and to ensure that the Government's strict orders against anything in the nature of land operations were strictly observed. After a short struggle the pirates abandoned their headquarters at Ras al Khaima, which was duly burned, while Linga was occupied without resistance and Qishm surrendered and reverted to Omani sovereignty. The local prestige of the Wahhabis remained unaffected by this veiled challenge to their policy on the coast, and their armies continued to overrun the interior districts of Oman. Moreover, their moral ascendancy had made itself felt even in such distant tracts as the Hadhramaut and Yaman. The Wahhabi empire thus extended in 1811 from Aleppo in the north to the Indian Ocean, and from the Persian Gulf and the ‘Iraq frontier in the east to the Red Sea. Such an empire, comprising elements of an essentially centrifugal character and blessed with no means of communication faster than the camel, was enough to tax the resources of the strongest state and of the ablest administrator, even in the normal circumstances of peace. In war it would need a superman to hold it together, and the war clouds were already gathering on the distant horizon of the north-west.

Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt, had long harboured the ambition of conquering Arabia, but the Porte, justly suspecting a personal element in such an ambition, had ever set its face against such an enterprise conducted by such a man. By 1811, however, the Wahhabi menace had assumed such alarming proportions that something drastic had to be done to obviate possible consequences of a yet more serious nature. At the same time Muhammad 'Ali had built up for himself in Egypt a position which could scarcely be differentiated from effective independence, and no harm could be done by engaging him in an enterprise which would deflect his energies from the path of treason, and might result in his defeat and humiliation, to the great advantage of his Ottoman sovereign. He was accordingly authorised to take such steps as might be necessary to crush the Wahhabi movement, and he set about the task with a good will. Suez became a vast military camp, and in the autumn, Tusun, the youthful son of the Egyptian Viceroy, set out for Arabia with his 10,000. The cavalry went by land *via* 'Aqaba to Yanbu', the port of Madina, where the infantry, under Tusun himself, arrived by sea in October 1811. Yanbu' was taken without much difficulty, and the great army began its march inland. The first objective was Badr, a tract of lofty sand-dunes at the point where Wadi Safra debouches from the mountains into the plain. Here the Prophet Muhammad had in the second year of the Hijra gained his first victory against overwhelming numbers of the infidels, and here to this day the passing Badawin experience an uncanny consciousness of a supernatural presence among the sand-heaps, which under certain climatic conditions emit a booming sound as of long-drawn wailing. The Egyptian soldiery had begun to suffer already from the hardships of campaigning in an inhospitable land, and a long delay at Badr can scarcely have disposed them to confidence in the result of their wild adventure. Nevertheless they advanced up the Wadi, where the Badawin had concentrated at the oasis of Judaida to contest their passage. The narrowness of the pass held the Egyptians at a disadvantage, and their overwhelming superiority in numbers proved a hindrance to free movement. The Badawin controlled the situation, and a decisive defeat became a rout. Tusun and his army fled, leaving seven guns to the enemy. There was nothing more to do but to sit and languish at Yanbu' until further reinforcements arrived. Meanwhile the news of the arrival of the Egyptians had been carried to Sa'ud, who was actually on the way to attack Baghdad, and who now turned west to direct the operations against the invaders. A Wahhabi envoy was despatched to Bushire to make overtures to the British Resident, but the Indian Government, while professing to desire the maintenance of friendly relations with the Wahhabi state, declined to involve itself in a treaty. In view of the Egyptian operations, the British authorities preferred to sit on the fence, and meanwhile to give Saiyid Sa'id of Masqat their moral support in his efforts to establish his influence over the Qawasim pirates of Ras al Khaima. Their policy was one of hope rather than of decision; and their hope was that circumstances might weaken the Wahhabi cause without their intervention.

Tusun spent the days of his enforced inactivity at Yanbu' in efforts to secure the adhesion of the Badawin, and fortune now played into his hands. One of the Harb chiefs, Ibn Shadid, had been degraded by Sa'ud for alleged insubordination, and threw in his lot with the Egyptians, together with a considerable following of his own tribesmen. Under him Tusun formed a large auxiliary army of Badawin, whom he paid and armed generously and with whose support he felt again strong enough to advance. This time he found the passes unoccupied, and Madina was reached without opposition. For over two months it was besieged, but at the end of 1812 it surrendered, and Tusun was able to join Ghalib at Jidda. 'Abdullah, who was in command of the Wahhabi army in the Hijaz, evacuated Mecca, which was forthwith occupied by the Egyptians under Mustafa Bey, the Viceroy's brother-in-law. Thus once more the holy cities of Islam were free of Wahhabi control, to remain so for more than a century. The Wahhabi empire seemed too large for effective cohesion, and the Emperor himself, now in his sixty-seventh year and wearied by a life of continuous exertion, was ill. It was the moment for a special effort by his enemies. The Syrian border towns were easily freed from Wahhabi domination, and the 'Iraq tribes were encouraged to be troublesome on the outskirts of Najd itself; while the doom of the Wahhabi power seemed indeed to be near when Muhammad 'Ali Pasha himself decided to assume the chief command of the operations in the Hijaz to consummate the victories of his son.

On August 28th, 1813, he landed at Jidda, where his first step was to supersede Ghalib in the Amirate and to send him into exile at Salonica, where he died two years later. Yahya, the son of a former Amir, Surur, was appointed in his place, but the effective executive power was reserved for Ahmad Pasha, who was made Governor of the Hijaz. The holy land had thus been rescued from the Wahhabis only to be made a province of Egypt. But Muhammad 'Ali's position was by no means yet secure. The coastal towns of the Hijaz, 'Asir and Yaman, were occupied without any great difficulty, but the interior was still held for the Wahhabi cause by the ever-faithful 'Uthman al Madhaifi, whose headquarters were at Taif. Mustafa Bey was now despatched to deal with him, and 'Uthman made the tactical blunder of evacuating the town and taking up a position in its neighbourhood, where he was defeated and captured, to be sent to Constantinople for execution. After this success Mustafa advanced into the desert, where Faisal, the second son of Sa‘ud, lay with his forces awaiting developments in the Hijaz. The Wahhabis went out to meet the enemy with a woman, Ghaliya, the wife of a Subai‘ chief, at their head, riding in a state palanquin, to encourage the tribesmen to the utmost exertions. The Egyptians were signally defeated, and retreated, leaving their guns and baggage to the enemy. The Wahhabi star seemed once more to be in the ascendant; Sa‘ud himself came down to Hanakiya and laid siege to Madina, which was only relieved in the nick of time by the arrival of a force of 300 cavalry pushed up in all haste; Qunfidha was recaptured by the Wahhabis owing to the stupidity of the Turkish general, Zaim Oghlou; the climate was beginning to tell on the troops; and once more the Egyptian position began to look somewhat precarious. Muhammad ‘Ali made stupendous efforts to rally his army with generous presents and extra rations, and fortune favoured him. On May 1st, 1814, Sa‘ud died of a sudden seizure at Dar‘iya, at the age of sixty-eight, leaving eleven sons by four wives. With him died the last hope of the permanence of the Wahhabi empire, which he had done so much to create and which he alone had actually enjoyed. His son ‘Abdullah, who now succeeded him, was made of different stuff, and, finding himself surrounded with dangers, began his reign with an attempt at negotiation with an enemy who was sworn to destroy his country and his faith. Wahhabism had been fortunate in its first three champions, but was now doomed to a long period of eclipse until such champions should be born again in the house of Sa‘ud.

‘Abdullah’s brother, Faisal, still maintained his position in the west, and even, after the failure of an Egyptian expedition under 'Abidin Bey against Zahran, advanced to threaten Taif, where for a time Tusun found himself in serious jeopardy until his father advanced to relieve him and force Faisal to retire into the desert. Tusun then concentrated a force of 2500 cavalry and infantry at Madina for an invasion of Najd. Arrived in the Qasim, he took Shinana after a siege of two days, and Rass immediately submitted, but Tusun's communications with Madina were cut by raiding-parties and he remained without news of his father, who had, in fact, returned to Egypt. In the circumstances he agreed to negotiations, and a treaty was concluded, whereby 'Abdullah acknowledged the suzerainty of the Ottoman Sultan and promised to pay him a visit of courtesy in the near future. Tusun on his part was to evacuate all Wahhabi territory, and the Najdis were to have free access to the Hijaz. There can be little doubt that 'Abdullah, who had been strongly reinforced from all the southern provinces, including the Hasa and even Oman, was at this moment in a position to annihilate the Egyptian force operating in his country with a growing shortage of provisions and ammunition. But he allowed the opportunity to slip from his hands, and Tusun retired in safety to Madina and Yanbu', whence he set sail for Suez. Muhammad 'Ali denounced the treaty which had saved his army from destruction, and threatened 'Abdullah with an attack on Dar'iya itself unless he immediately proceeded to Constantinople as stipulated. But 'Abdullah, freed of the presence of Egyptian troops, had no stomach to make the acquaintance of his suzerain, and devoted himself to rallying the loyalty of his tribes and to strengthening his capital with walls, guns and provisions against a siege.

Meanwhile Muhammad ‘Ali had designated his adopted son, Ibrahim Pasha, for the command of the next Arabian expedition, preparations for which were pushed on with all haste at the base-camp at Suez. A start was not made until the early autumn of 1816, when a cavalry force of 500 Maghrabis, under Hassan Kashif, was despatched by land to Yanbu‘ to await the arrival of the main body, which was transported on camels to Qusair and there embarked on the armada prepared for the descent on Arabia. Ibrahim landed at Yanbu‘ on September 28th, and proceeded at once with his personal bodyguard to Madina to perform the customary devotions at the Prophet's tomb. An advanced base was formed at Suwaidara, or perhaps Suwaiqiya, on the inland route between Madina and Mecca; and Ibrahim set himself actively to curry favour with the Badawin tribes. The bulk of the ‘Ataiba, Harb and Mutair and elements from the Shammar and ‘Anaza joined him, and in December he advanced to Hanakiya, west of Madina. Here a considerable delay took place, and his troops suffered so severely from dysentery that he had to construct barracks to replace their tents. This at any rate argued a determination to stay, and may well have had a damping effect on the most zealous of the Badawin; and ‘Abdullah found it necessary to take the initiative against the enemy to restore the morale of his own people. He found the Egyptians entrenched at the watering of Mawiya west of Hanakiya, but their artillery was far too much for the Arabs, and he retreated back to the Qasim. Ibrahim followed up his retirement, and arrived at Rass in June 1817. Here, with more courage than discretion, he threw the flower of his army into an assault against the stout walls of the town without any kind of preparation or preliminary bombardment. The defenders flung them back with a loss of 800 men, and Ibrahim, beaten and bruised, had to settle down to a regular siege of four months, during which Faisal ibn Sa'ud harried his line of communications by constant raids. The Wahhabi leader was, however, unable to do more than this to relieve the pressure on the town, which was steadily exhausting its stock of provisions and ammunition, and which in October, having rendered great service to the cause by so long delaying the advance of the invaders, capitulated on honourable terms. The Egyptian army undertook not to set foot within the walls, and apparently faithfully observed its engagement; but it was free now to advance, and a short bombardment in each case sufficed to dispose of Khabra and 'Anaiza. Buraida also surrendered after the capture by assault of one of its key positions; but Ibrahim met with stout resistance at Shaqra, until his French aide-de-camp, Vaissière, who was one of several European technical experts with the Egyptian army, took charge of the artillery, trained his guns on the main fort and completely silenced its five guns. The siege had only lasted six days, and there was now nothing between the victorious Egyptians and the goal of their adventure.

Shaqra fell in January 1818, and Ibrahim Pasha, marching down the Butain plain of western Mahmal and detaching a portion of his force to reduce the oasis of Dharma on his flank, entered the upper reaches of Wadi Hanifa by the Haisiya pass. On April 6th he appeared before the Wahhabi capital, and the curtain rose on the last act of the drama of the first Wahhabi empire. The city and its extensive oasis occupied the wide bed of the Wadi between steeply eroded cliffs, on whose edge a series of blockhouses and forts had been erected; the upper and lower entrances to the valley had been secured by strongly garrisoned forts; and the city itself, perched on an eminence in the midst of the Wadi, was strongly walled about; the fortified area was a vast enceinte, which it would have taken a much larger army than Ibrahim's to blockade effectively; and finally the besieging army itself was surrounded by a hostile population which hovered on its outskirts to take advantage of any carelessness that might expose small bodies of troops to their tender mercies. Neither side seems to have experienced any difficulty in replenishing its stores from time to time; and sorties by the garrison were as frequent as assaults on the defences. The Egyptians, indeed, suffered one calamity which might have been very serious: the whole of their ammunition store exploded as the result of an accidental spark from a bivouac fire too near the danger zone. The Wahhabis immediately made a sortie in force, but were thrown back in confusion by a withering fire; and Ibrahim sat down with patient determination to await the arrival of reinforcements and further stores of ammunition. His skill and tenacity were altogether admirable. He had been laughed at when he volunteered to conquer Arabia, and he was determined to go down to history as the conqueror of Arabia.

It is related among the legends of Muhammad 'Ali that the Viceroy, determined to accomplish the destruction of the Wahhabis, had on his return from the Hijaz convened a council of war to consider ways and means. On the floor of the council chamber the military experts invited to the conference found a carpet of vast proportions with an apple set in its midst. The problem for solution was how to reach the apple without setting foot on the carpet, how to capture Dar'iya without conquering Arabia. The solver of the problem should command the Arabian expedition. One after another the assembled generals made themselves ridiculous with fruitless acrobatic feats, but the merriment became uproarious when the squat-built child who was the adopted son of the Pasha stood forth to try his hand. Getting down on his hands and knees, he proceeded to roll up the carpet towards its centre until he reached and seized the apple and claimed the prize. The merriment of the assembled generals turned to resentment at so poor a joke in the august presence of their master; but the Viceroy was impressed by the resourceful impudence of the ungainly youth, and Ibrahim Pasha, having rolled up the desert approaches to the Wahhabi capital by relentless fighting and copious bribery, was now almost within reach of the apple. The future was to prove that he was gifted with more military and administrative talent than his elders suspected, and some day he would rule Syria and for a brief space Egypt too.

After the arrival of reinforcements and ammunition, Ibrahim began to press the siege anew, and in August a breach was made in the outer defences. This was the beginning of the end. A part of the garrison now went over to the enemy, and many of the inhabitants fled from the wrath to come into the desert. One section after another of the outer ramparts fell into the enemy's hands, and one by one the fortified hamlets of the valley were captured, until all that remained to the Wahhabis was the citadel of Turaif, already scarred with ruinous breaches in its walls. Foot by foot the defenders fought back to the mosque, the earliest monument of the Wahhabi faith, and not till then did 'Abdullah yield to the inevitable. In person he went to Ibrahim and sought only to secure a conqueror's clemency for those who had served him to the end and for what remained of the city's buildings. For himself he asked and got no quarter. He was received with all the honour due to a valiant foe in the hour of defeat. He was sent forthwith to the Ottoman capital to meet the suzerain he had acknowledged and defied. He was beheaded in the public square of St. Sophia, and with him died the Wahhabi empire. But the spirit that had created it could not die so easily, as we shall see as the story proceeds, though nearly a century later a learned and well-informed observer of Arabian affairs, the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, could write: "The old Wahhabi power is now broken for ever." Yet the rebirth of the Wahhabi empire would herald the passing of the Ottoman Califate, and the old fanaticism of Arabia was destined to relight the torch of Islam amid the laxities of our own enlightened age.

CHAPTER VI

ARABIA UNDER THE EGYPTIANS

IBRAHIM PASHA made a triumphal entry into Dar'iya on September 9th, 1818, and the Wahhabi capital was soon delivered over to pillage and arson. Many members of the Sa'ud family had made good their escape before or immediately after the surrender of 'Abdullah and had taken refuge among the tribes and in outlying settlements; others, together with a number of the leading citizens of the town, were sent to Egypt as prisoners and their property was confiscated. The walls and bastions which had given so much trouble were razed to the ground and even the flourishing palm-groves of the valley were wantonly destroyed. Meanwhile Egyptian detachments were sent into the surrounding districts to show the victorious flag and to occupy the various towns. They penetrated to the coast and occupied and garrisoned Qatif and Hufuf, to the annoyance of the British authorities, who were glad enough of the fate that had overtaken the Wahhabi state, but were scarcely prepared for so natural a consequence thereof. A British officer, Captain G. F. Sadlier, was immediately deputed to visit Ibrahim at Dar'iya and discuss the intentions of the new rulers of Arabia, with the object of discouraging any tendency on their part to establish themselves on the shores of the Persian Gulf, which was already envisaged as a British lake as the result of the interest in it created by the still recent activities of Napoleon. The slackening of Wahhabi pressure on Oman after the death of Sa'ud had directed diplomatic attention to the eminent suitability of Saiyid Sa'id to be the ally of Great Britain in the task of controlling the Gulf. In 1816 he had attempted to occupy Bahrain, but had been repulsed by the 'Atban in spite of the assistance of Rahma ibn Jabir, the celebrated pirate chief of Kuwait. The latter had then joined with the Egyptians in attacks on the Wahhabi coastal positions and had secured from them a safe haven for the conduct of his piratical exploits, in which, however, he was careful to avoid British shipping. Meanwhile the British had made a half-hearted attempt to attack Ras al Khaima in consequence of a renewal of piracy from that quarter; but in 1818 they effectually stopped the Qawasim from crossing over to the Persian side of the Gulf to evade the attentions of Ibrahim Pasha, on whose behalf in the same year Rahma unsuccessfully attacked Bahrain, and only escaped capture by blowing himself up in his own ship. The situation was ripe for British action on the pirate coast, but it was advisable to neutralise Ottoman aspirations in the same direction by a gesture of friendliness.

Unfortunately Captain Sadlier arrived at Dar'iya in August 1819, only to find that Ibrahim had left the previous month on his return to the Hijaz, whence he proposed to take ship as soon as possible to enjoy the triumphal reception that awaited him in Egypt. Sadlier continued on his way in pursuit of the Pasha, whom he caught up in the neighbourhood of Madina and found in the best of tempers, though disinclined to recognise the right of the British Government to be interested in the fate of the country he had conquered for the Ottoman Empire. Sadlier, apparently only too anxious to quit a country so disagreeable, did not press his suit and proceeded to Jidda to embark for India, scarcely conscious that he had achieved the distinction of being the first European ever to cross the Arabian peninsula from sea to sea. His report was sufficient to encourage the British to direct action on the Qawasim coast in co-operation with Saiyid Sa'id; and in November 1819 a powerful expeditionary force of men and ships assembled at the rendezvous of Qishm Island to join the Masqat fleet. On December 9th the pirate stronghold of Ras al Khaima was taken after a siege of six days, and this success was followed by a careful scrutiny of the coast between there and Bahrain, in the course of which many pirate-nests were combed out and much useful information was obtained for the Government of India. Great Britain had established a prescriptive right of surveillance along the pirate coast, and that right was emphasised and exercised as time went on.

Ibrahim Pasha, content with his victory, seems to have made but little attempt to organise the administration of the conquered territory on a permanent basis. It is true that Turkish garrisons were left behind in Najd and that the ports of the Yaman Tihama were occupied by Turkish forces; but in both cases a policy of actual rule by local chiefs under Turkish suzerainty appears to have been the ideal adopted in preference to direct administration, which was, however, applied to the Hijaz, presumably in virtue of its special standing in the Islamic world. The Yaman Tihama was left, apparently without any Turkish garrisons, to the rule of the Imam Mahdi 'Abdullah, who undertook to pay an annual tribute in recognition of Ottoman sovereignty. In Najd the choice of Ibrahim had fallen on a member of the old princely family of 'Ayaina, named Muhammad ibn Mishari ibn Mu'ammar, who was duly installed in office with the support of the Turkish garrisons, and who, being a man of great capacity, soon gathered round him a following of the old inhabitants of Dar'iya and exerted himself to restore something of the former prosperity of the oasis. In spite, however, of the support of Isma'il Pasha, who was left behind in command of the occupying troops, Muhammad found himself exposed on all sides to attack either by the unruly elements which had been kept in check by the Wahhabi régime or by members of the Wahhabi royal family, which still had a substantial following in the country. As in 'Iraq many decades later, the Turkish garrisons were content to hold the towns in which they were posted and to leave the provinces to look after themselves. Such an attitude was a direct incentive to trouble, and trouble soon occurred. It began in the Hasa, where the chief of the Bani Khalid, Majid ibn 'Arai'ar, began to carve a kingdom for himself out of the Wahhabi wreck, with some success of a temporary nature; but more serious developments ensued when Mishari, a brother of 'Abdullah, returned from Egypt and occupied Dar'iya for a short space in March 1820, only to be ejected again and interned at Sadus and 'Ayaina, with the assistance of Turkish reinforcements from the Qasim, where Isma'il Pasha had established his headquarters. But the overbearing conduct of the foreign troops and the very fact of their presence reacted unfavourably on the situation of Muhammad ibn Mu'ammar, and, early in 1821, the simmering revolt found a worthy leader in Turki, a first cousin of Sa'ud and nephew of the great 'Abdul 'Aziz. Dar'iya was captured, and the unfortunate Muhammad suffered the fate which the Turkish Sultan had inflicted on 'Abdullah, while Khalid Pasha, who had relieved Isma'il, was unable to do anything to save his protégé. Turki had escaped from Dar'iya before its surrender to Riyadh, whence he fled to Sudair and eventually to Basra, to remain in hiding in the lion's den itself until the situation in Najd drew him back for an effort to shake off the Ottoman yoke. Khalid Pasha retired to the Qasim, and the rising became general. Turki re-established the forms of the Wahhabi state, with his capital at Riyadh, which was better situated than Dar'iya and presented less difficulty in the task of reorganisation than the ruinous heaps of the old capital. A strong wall was built round the town, which was furnished with a palace and a mosque; but these operations were interrupted by the arrival of Husain Bey Dhahir, who had relieved Khalid and made a fortified base at Tharmida to crush the rebellion by brute force. Plundering and destroying far and wide, he alienated the whole population; but on his approach with a strong force Turki, whose fortifications were not yet completed, deemed it prudent to evacuate Riyadh and seek a temporary refuge in the southern wilds about Hariq, whither Husain relentlessly pursued him. The treachery of his guides, however, led the army into the heart of a waterless maze of sand-dunes, and there left it to perish of thirst almost to a man, though Husain himself and a few others escaped to report the calamity to Muhammad 'Ali, who now abandoned the idea of holding Najd south of the Qasim, though Turkish garrisons continued for some years to hold some of the more important towns and the guerilla warfare continued. The garrisons were regularly reinforced or relieved at intervals from their base at Madina, and the Turkish authorities took advantage of these relief expeditions to levy taxes on the various oases on the way, thus adding materially to the unpopularity of the Turkish cause. The Mutair tribe under Faisal al Duwish was their main local support, constantly raiding the oases subject to Turki; but the people as a whole acknowledged the latter, who had re-established himself at Riyadh, and Faisal's activities were held in check by the powerful ‘Anaza tribe, whose chief was Mash‘an ibn Mughailat ibn Hadhdhal of the ‘Amarat section. In 1824 this chief looted a large caravan bringing provisions from ‘Iraq at Jarrab, and Faisal, supported by Turkish troops, pursued and caught him up at Shamasiya, where Mash‘an was killed in the ensuing battle, though the ‘Anaza gained the victory and retained their spoil. By 1827 Turki had progressed so far that he was able to occupy the Qasim, and three years later, after a prolonged campaign in which he had the assistance of the Shammar under their head chief, Salih ibn ‘Ali, he completely defeated the Bani Khalid and conquered the Hasa. Meanwhile Mishari ibn ‘Abdul Rahman, a prince of a collateral branch of the Sa‘ud family, had in 1825 escaped from captivity in Egypt and had been appointed Governor of Manfuha by Turki. He appears, however, to have harboured greater ambitions for himself, and while Turki was engaged in the Hasa campaign he raised the standard of revolt and collected a large following, particularly from the Hijaz tribes. His attempt ended in failure and in his own internment at Riyadh, but Isma‘il Bey, the Turkish commander, was at this time making extraordinary efforts to check the growing power of Turki. The Ruwala branch of the ‘Anaza tribe, under Sahn ibn Durai‘i ibn Sha‘lan, was prominent in the guerrilla fighting of 1833, and effectually stalemated the efforts of the Turkish troops and their Mutair allies to tighten their hold on the country; but Isma‘il was more successful with his intrigues, and in 1834, when the bulk of the army was away in the Hasa with Turki's son, Faisal, Mishari was able to encompass the assassination of the Amir and to declare himself ruler with Turkish support. On receiving news of this disaster Faisal hastened back to the capital, accompanied by the Riyadh contingent of his army and by ‘Abdullah ibn Rashid, a member of the ruling family of the Shammar, who for dynastic reasons had had to leave Hail and had for many years followed the fortunes of Turki. The returning soldiers had no difficulty in obtaining admittance to the city, and Mishari seems not to have had any suspicion of possible treachery on their part. Faisal and ‘Abdullah with a small bodyguard remained outside the walls until their preparations had matured, and, when all was ready, ‘Abdullah with forty men was secretly introduced into the main fort and avenged the murder of Turki by slaying Mishari with his own hand. The latter's success had thus been short-lived, and within two months of Turki's death Faisal was acknowledged as ruler in his place. ‘Abdullah ibn Rashid was forthwith appointed Governor of Hail as a reward for his conspicuous share in the adventure, and we shall in due course meet him again as the founder of a North Arabian dynasty which would rival, and for a short period eclipse, the House of Sa‘ud before its final collapse in our own time.

Meanwhile, though the Turks were having nothing but trouble in Arabia for their pains in crushing the Wahhabi movement, their success had opened wide the door of the Persian Gulf to a Power which had respected the effective supremacy of Arab control on the coast, but had every reason to view with apprehension any expansion of the Ottoman Empire towards its Indian dependencies. The ten years of chaos which followed the surrender of Dar‘iya were usefully employed by Great Britain in building up along the Arabian shore of the Gulf an exclusive and privileged position, which would thenceforth remain a traditional plank of her foreign policy. It is true that Turki and Faisal were soon re-engaged in reducing the Hasa and the coastal settlements like Qatif to their former allegiance, and even in raiding as far afield as the Oman hinterland; but the Wahhabi power was never again effectively established in any part of Oman or on the pirate coast, in spite of the astonishing persistence of the Wahhabi creed in rivalry with the official Ibadhiya cult of the country to the present day. Adversity, of which it has had its fair share, has never dimmed the light of that simple faith kindled in the midst of Arabia; and it is indeed to adversity that it owed an unexpected extension of influence, for it was at this time that one Saiyid Ahmad of Bareli took back with him from the Meccan pilgrimage to India the seed from which, after his death in a *Jihad* against his enemies in 1831, grew the Wahhabi reaction of the Black Mountain and its reverberations elsewhere.

Sir William Grant Keir's successful naval demonstration against the Qawasim pirates was followed in January 1820 by the drafting of a preliminary treaty of peace, which was duly signed by all the Shaikhs of the pirate coast and by the 'Atabi ruler of Bahrain, with whom Great Britain now entered into formal relations destined to endure. In the same year the Imam Sa'id, who had been the titular though not the effective head of the Oman state since 1775, died, and his nephew, Saiyid Sa'id, ruled in name as well as in fact. Piracy on the part of the Qawasim was now ended for all practical purposes, and piracy was defined in one of the clauses of the treaty as including the carrying off of slaves from the East African coast for the Arabian and adjacent markets. To make supervision of the new arrangements effective, all the Qawasim ports except 'Ajman recognised the general supremacy of Sultan ibn Saqar of Ras al Khaima. One nest of piratical enterprise still survived, however, in the province of Ja'lan, whose port was Sur, and which had become thoroughly impregnated with Wahhabi fanaticism. This was now dealt with by a British–Indian force supported by Saiyid Sa'id with 2000 Badawin auxiliaries; but the Bani Bu 'Ali tribesmen put up a stern fight and the expeditionary force was routed, losing seven British officers and 270 sepoys killed and its eight guns. Such a disaster could not be left unavenged, and in March 1821 a strong force was landed to march on the chief settlement of the tribe in the interior, Balad Bani Bu 'Ali, where the tribesmen were defeated after a struggle. A number of them were taken prisoners and sent for a sojourn of some years in India, while the tribe never fully recovered its old position of dominance in the hinterland, and the incident is still remembered with awe.

In 1822 Basidu on Qishm Island became the British naval headquarters in the Gulf, though it was soon abandoned as being too unhealthy; and another salutary reform was the general prohibition of trading by the political officers serving in the Gulf. As in India, the position built up in these parts by British commercial enterprise was beginning gradually to be usurped by the Crown in the political and strategic interests of Great Britain; the consular officers serving on the Arabian coast came under the direct control of the home Government to co-ordinate a moral and political resistance to the influence exercised by the French advisers of the Pasha of Egypt. And it was about the year 1825 that the status of British representation at Jidda was raised by the posting of a consul to that port, where and in the Hijaz generally Muhammad 'Ali still maintained effective control.

His nominee, Yahya ibn Surur, found himself in trouble in 1827, when, having killed a rival within the precincts of the Haram itself, he fled to the Harb tribe for sanctuary. The Turkish Governor then appointed ‘Abdul Muttalib, son of the exiled and now dead Ghalib, to the vacant Amirate; but Muhammad ‘Ali intervened to cancel this appointment in favour of Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Mu‘in al ‘Aun of the ‘Abadilah clan, who ruled till 1851, and whose grandson was destined to rule the Hijaz as king for a decade in the twentieth century. A rising against him at Taif under the instigation of Yahya and ‘Abdul Muttalib was duly suppressed with the assistance of the Turkish military, and the new Amir was later able to render good service to his suzerain by establishing effective control over the ‘Asir province.

Faisal lost no time in organising a general rising of the towns and tribes of Najd against the Egyptian occupation, and in 1836 Isma‘il Pasha was forced to retreat from an untenable position. But Khurshid Pasha, who had now become Governor of Arabia, immediately set himself to retrieve the situation, and in 1837 Khalid, a younger son of the great Sa‘ud, arrived at ‘Anaiza with an Egyptian army to contest the usurpation of Faisal. The country was thus skilfully divided, and Khalid rapidly gained adherents in the Qasim and also in Jabal Shammar, where ‘Abdullah ibn Rashid was supplanted by the titular head of the clan, ‘Isa ibn ‘Ali. Riyadh opened its gates to him on his advance, and Faisal retired to Hauta, where the Egyptian troops were heavily defeated. Faisal countered by laying siege to Riyadh without success, and withdrew to Dilam, whence he sent his brother Jiluwi with presents to Khurshid Pasha, who had established his headquarters at ‘Anaiza and had gained the support of the Mutair chief, Muhammad al Duwish, and even of Faisal's old friend, 'Abdullah ibn Rashid. Faisal's overtures failed to make any impression on Khurshid, who at the end of 1838 surrounded Dilam and forced him to sue for peace, which was only accorded on condition that he should leave the country for Egypt. Khalid was now universally acknowledged as ruler, and Khurshid Pasha proceeded to consolidate the Turkish position in the Hasa and at Qatif, whence he also threatened Bahrain until warned by British protests to relinquish any designs he had in that direction. Meanwhile the strengthening of Egyptian control in Najd had produced some reaction against Khalid, and a pretender appeared in the person of 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian, a great-great-nephew of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, the founder of the Wahhabi state. Nothing, however, could be attempted while the occupying forces were in the country; but in the summer of 1840 the Turkish garrisons were withdrawn and the country was left to its own devices and to the inevitable accompaniment of confusion. By the end of 1841 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian was master of Riyadh and Khalid was a fugitive seeking by devious routes to regain the Hijaz, whence he had so lately come at the head of a foreign army. Meanwhile word was sent to Faisal, who appears to have escaped from his Egyptian captivity and to have been residing incognito at Damascus as a student of Hanbali jurisprudence, that the moment was opportune for his reappearance. He went down with his brother Jiluwi by way of Hail, where his old friend, 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, and the latter's brother, 'Ubaid, declared for him and placed their considerable army at his disposal for a march on Riyadh. The country rose enthusiastically in his favour, and after only a month of siege 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian surrendered Riyadh in June 1843. Faisal was once more master in his father's house, and the fallen usurper did not long survive his relinquishment of power. He died suddenly, and it is perhaps natural to assume that he did not die naturally; it was said that he had been poisoned in the interests of the common weal.

Faisal now entered upon an unchallenged reign of all but a quarter of a century, in which must be sought the real beginnings of the modern Wahhabi state, in contradistinction to the first empire which had collapsed under the vigorous blows of the Egyptian Viceroy, to be followed by a quarter of a century of anarchy and general chaos. Preoccupations in Syria, where Ibrahim Pasha had ruled for a decade with conspicuous ability and success, and the rapid onset of old age and ill-health, had cooled Muhammad 'Ali's ardour for a desert empire in Arabia; and we hear no more of active Turkish or Egyptian intervention in the Wahhabi country, though at times the Sharif of Mecca would attempt to maintain the shadow of the Porte's authority. Faisal ruled a territory considerably smaller in extent than that of his great ancestors, but perhaps more compact and better woven together on the loom of Wahhabism. A new generation had grown up whose oldest members knew not the Jacob of the old paganism, whose faded and perished remnants may yet be found in our day as patches on the new garment of dour dogmatism which passes for philosophy among the nomad tribes of the desert. The Arabia of Faisal was Wahhabi, in a sense unknown to the heyday of the Wahhabi empire; and Faisal's reign was one of administrative consolidation and progress in education and other arts of peace, leading up, by the irony of fate, to a final tragedy of dynastic dissension.

Peace was, however, still in Arabia a relative conception, and the early years of the new reign were full enough of the military activities which almost monopolised the annals of its predecessors with their dreary monotony. The first objective of the new ruler was the Hasa province, where the unruly tribes of Bani Khalid and 'Ajman were coerced to co-operate in the final occupation of the great towns and the ports, Hufuf and Mubarraz, Qatif and Jubail and 'Uqair; but British moral support enabled the Khalifa family to maintain its independent status in the islands of Bahrain, on which it had wholly concentrated its energies since its expulsion by the Egyptians from the Hasa. Faisal was now free to deal with the Qasim, which had resented the return of Wahhabi rule after the easy-going domination of Turkish pashas. The old ruling families of the various towns were deposed or subjected to the central authority of an 'Aqaili Governor, Nasir ibn 'Abdul Rahman al Shaimi; but the disgruntled elements appealed to Mecca for help, where, after an interregnum of four years and a sojourn in Egypt consequent upon his quarrel with the Egyptian Wali of the Hijaz, Muhammad ibn 'Aun had become for all practical purposes an independent ruler since the destruction of Muhammad 'Ali's power in Syria in 1840 by a combination of England, Austria and France in the cause of Sultan 'Abdul Majid. The Egyptian Viceroy, though he appointed a new Wali to Jidda, had now relinquished all serious interest in the Red Sea provinces of Arabia; and Muhammad ibn 'Aun set himself with great energy to restore the old prestige and territorial position of the Sharifs during the last half of the eighteenth century. Meanwhile the lowlands of 'Asir and the Yaman were left to make the best of such local rulers as the chaos might produce, of whom the most outstanding was one Sharif Husain of Abu 'Arish, who had established himself as ruler of the Yaman Tihama in 1843 under the authority of a nominal Ottoman mandate, while the hinterland acknowledged the Imam of San'a. In 1845, however, the Red Sea littoral reverted to direct though somewhat ineffective Ottoman rule, doubtless attracted by the spectacle of the occupation of Aden by Great Britain six years earlier, partly by agreement with the ruler of Lahj and partly by force on the failure of the latter to abide by the terms of his bargain. For some years no attempt was made by the Turks to make their rule in these parts other than ineffective, but in 1849, acting on the advice of Muhammad ibn 'Aun, an expeditionary force was sent to wrest Hudaida and other towns of the Tihama from Sharif Husain. Having achieved this object, the Turkish commander, Taufiq Pasha, marched on San'a itself and unseated the Imam Mutawakkil in favour of another ruler, whose "election" was duly arranged to the general satisfaction, which was almost immediately demonstrated by a general rising, resulting in the precipitate withdrawal of the wounded Turkish commander to Hudaida and the return of the rightful Imam to his throne.

To return to the Qasim, Muhammad ibn 'Aun was not the man to neglect the godsent opportunity presented by the appeal of the local malcontents against the administrative reforms of Faisal. Without delay he recruited a force mainly composed of Badawin elements, and in 1846 marched west, only to find that Faisal was prepared to save himself by making substantial concessions to Sharifian vanity, so he might remain in peace to deal with his own subjects as he pleased. An annual tribute of 10,000 Arabian dollars (Maria Theresa), equivalent to £1000, was offered and accepted, and the authority of the Sharif was acknowledged in respect of the Mutair and ‘Ataiba sections, ranging over the western desert and even of a part of western Qasim. Muhammad ibn ‘Aun, having achieved these barren advantages for himself, forgot the purpose for which he had gone forth to the Qasim, and forthwith returned to the Hijaz without having struck a blow in defence of his protégés, who were thus left to the tender mercies of the Wahhabi ruler, while the prestige of the latter had unquestionably suffered somewhat from the humiliating though nominal arrangement with his adversary. Loss of prestige was, however, a minor matter in comparison with a more serious danger which now began to loom large in the north, where ‘Abdullah ibn Rashid had already gone far towards carving out for himself and his family an independent position amid the welter of Arabian chaos, when, in 1847, he died a natural death, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Talal. Muhammad ibn ‘Aun lost no opportunity of encouraging this northern rival to become a serious makeweight to the state of Riyadh in the balance of Arabian power.

Meanwhile Faisal's son, ‘Abdullah, conducted a vigorous campaign in and on the outskirts of the Qasim, where the tribes, as well as some of the towns, were far from accepting peacefully the situation in which they had been left by the retirement of the Sharif. In 1850 the Dahamisha section of the ‘Anaza were finally defeated at Tarafiya, and the ‘Ataiba clans at Jarrab, while Faisal himself threatened the important city of Buraida until its ruler, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, was compelled to recognise his suzerainty and to submit to certain administrative reforms in accord with the general lines of Wahhabi policy. The Qasim was now under the effective rule of Faisal, whose Central Arabian territories were coextensive with those of his ancestors, though the position in the north was far from satisfactory, and, of course, the outlying provinces of the old empire, such as the Hijaz, the Yaman and Oman, were entirely out of the new picture. To add to his troubles, every attempt he made to stabilise his position in the north or among the western tribes was countered by some annoying move on the part of the Sharif, such as the placing of an embargo on pilgrims coming through Najd territory, or the instigation of rebellious movements in Jabal Shammar and the Qasim. Matters had, indeed, come to such a pass by 1855 that further concessions to the Sharif became necessary, and Faisal, to secure the admittance of pilgrims to Mecca, was forced to recognise the independence of 'Anaiza and Buraida. The former now reverted to the allegiance of its old ruling family represented by Zamil al Sulaim, a great name in the annals of what was for many years from this date the leading city-republic of Central Arabia; but at Buraida the Amir, Muhanna, went ever in fear of the return to power of the original ruling family of 'Alaiyan, and accordingly preferred to remain in subjection to Faisal. The now practically independent state of Hail also elected to acknowledge the overlordship of the Wahhabi dynasty at its doors, in order to avoid closer acquaintance with its military expeditions. Thus in effect the tactics of a distant Sharif, who was not always in a position to come to the assistance of his friends, were neutralised by local considerations; and only 'Anaiza, always proud of its independent spirit, was ready at all times to resist the pressure of its powerful neighbour, and even on occasion to take the initiative against him, as it did under Sharifian instigation in 1862. Zamil, however, had undertaken more than he could achieve, and a combination between Muhanna of Buraida and the Wahhabi ruler's third son, Muhammad, resulted in his defeat and submission to the payment of tribute.

Faisal, who was by now practically blind by reason of an affection he had contracted during his detention in Egypt, had been compelled to relinquish the executive government of the country to his eldest son, ‘Abdullah, who appears to have divided his time between Riyadh and the Hasa and to have been a capable though somewhat stern and unsympathetic ruler. His position was not, however, made any easier by the appointment of his brother, Sa‘ud, who was rendered popular by the charm of his manner and his lavish generosity, to the independent charge of the southern provinces; and William Gifford Palgrave, whose knowledge of Arabian politics and affairs is freely admitted even by those who challenge his claim to have travelled extensively in Central Arabia at this period, has left a striking picture of the dissensions of the two brothers, which had already begun to darken the last days of their blind old father and were to plunge the whole country into a welter of anarchy on his death in 1867. A third son of Faisal, Muhammad, administered the northern districts apparently in close touch with his eldest brother, while the youngest of the four brothers, ‘Abdul Rahman, was still in his teens and living with his father, who, apart from his domestic troubles, could during the last five years of his life regard with a measure of satisfaction the generally peaceful state of the country which he had rescued from chaos and foreign rule. And not the least triumph of these last years was represented by the visit of Colonel Lewis Pelly, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Wahhabi capital in 1865 for an interview with its ruler, which produced no immediate results commensurate with the fatigues and risks of such a journey, but laid the foundations of diplomatic intercourse between Great Britain and Arabia which a few decades later would develop into cordial friendliness.

The main object of this visit was doubtless to discuss various matters arising out of the conflict of British and Wahhabi interests in the lands bordering the Persian Gulf, the main outlines of whose history during the reign of Faisal may here be briefly reviewed. As has already been indicated, Great Britain throughout the Egyptian occupation of Najd and the Hasa had lost no opportunity of making it clear that she could not tolerate any ambitious programme of imperialistic character in the Gulf sphere on the part of the conquerors of Central Arabia; and it is probable that the eventual evacuation of Najd was, in part at least, due to Egyptian despair of making headway against an attitude which had already resorted to threats of blockade of the Hasa ports in reply to Egyptian perseverance in such schemes. Meanwhile the British authorities intensified their political activities in connection with the slave trade, which was still very much alive, as may be judged from the fact that in 1841 no fewer than 1217 slaves were brought to Kharag Island in 117 vessels, while in 1844 the British Political Resident, in reporting that Masqat and Sur were the chief ports of slave importation from Zanzibar, was constrained to place on record that the treatment of slaves on board the ships that brought them to market was far from bad, while their treatment after disposal to their new owners was definitely good. Nevertheless the stoppage of the trade had now become a cardinal feature of British policy in the Gulf, and in 1845 an agreement was come to with the ruler of Masqat for the prevention of the export of slaves from his East

African dominions, while simultaneously the independent ruler of Suhar was induced to agree to the seizure of slave-ships sailing under his flag. These arrangements were in due course ratified by an Act of Parliament authorising the officers concerned to act on the terms of the respective treaties, and the Persian Government also came into line by forbidding the import or export of slaves by sea. Meanwhile the British Government had taken the lead in extending the scope of the treaty of 1820 between the various Shaikhs of the old "pirate" coast, by inducing them in 1835 to agree to a maritime truce of six months, renewable from time to time. This ingenious arrangement largely diminished the temptations of the various chiefs to encroach on each other's territory and property; and the inconvenience involved in the constant periodical renewal of the truce was ended in 1843 by its extension for a period of ten years, while three or four years later treaties were entered into with five of the Trucial chiefs, as they now came to be called, by which the export of slaves on the ships of their subjects was forbidden. The state of Bahrain also adhered to these slave treaties, though it was not included among the Trucial states; and the ring was completed by the issue of a decree by the Ottoman Sultan forbidding Turkish vessels to carry slaves. At the same time a proposal for the establishment of a British protectorate over Bahrain came under serious consideration, only to be rejected in favour of a policy of "beneficent supervision"; while the State of Masqat was permitted to enter upon a treaty of commerce with the Government of France, which had recently concluded a similar treaty with Zanzibar. A treaty on the same lines was also made by Masqat with the United States of America; and by a Customs accord of 1846 between Saiyid Sa'id and Great

Britain the tariff on all imports was fixed at 5 per cent.

In 1852 Saiyid Sa'id succeeded in adding the hitherto independent port and territory of Suhar to his realm, which, however, on the land side still inclined to the Wahhabis and even on occasion paid taxes to collectors appointed by the Riyadh Government, though any effective activity on the part of the latter was made impossible by the British attitude of moral support of Saiyid Sa'id in Oman and the substantial measure of control over the Trucial coast secured by Great Britain in a new "Treaty of Peace in Perpetuity" negotiated to replace the maritime truce of 1843, or rather to enlarge its scope by the addition of an apparently innocent but important clause conferring on Great Britain the right and duty of watching over and enforcing it. The "free gift" of the Kuria Muria Islands and their guano deposits by the ruler of Oman to the British Crown and the final loss and relinquishment of most of the former's possessions on the Persian shore of the Gulf rounded off the process of territorial restriction and administrative and political consolidation which were the outstanding features of the reign of Sultan Sa'id. Zanzibar was still part of his realm, but his death on October 19th, 1856, at Seychelles while on the way thither proved to be the breaking of the last link between Africa and Arabia. His eldest son, Thuwaini, received British recognition as the ruler of Oman; but Majid, another son, ruled the African possessions of his father in return for the payment of tribute until 1861, when his failure to remit the sum due resulted in the intervention of Lord Canning, the Viceroy of India, and the final regularisation of the *de facto* situation by his arbitral award. Majid was now definitely recognised as Sultan of Zanzibar on his undertaking to pay in perpetuity to the Masqat treasury a sum of 40,000 dollars a year in liquidation of all claims whatsoever, this arrangement being assured for all time in 1873, when Great Britain assumed sole liability for the regular payment of the sum agreed on. Both Great Britain and France in 1862 accorded recognition to Masqat and Zanzibar as independent states.

Meanwhile the British Government had become involved in the Persian war of 1856–57, which was terminated by the Treaty of Paris, signed on March 4th, and providing for the continuance of the Anglo-Persian slave convention of 1851, which was to remain in force till 1882. The island of Perim was occupied by the British in 1857 to consolidate the strategic advantage of Aden; and the transference of the administration of India to the Crown after the Mutiny legalised as it were an important base of imperial operations, which had long been in actual existence. The affairs of the Persian Gulf now came definitely within the purview of British imperial concern, and intervention soon became necessary in consequence of the advancement of Turkish and Persian pretensions to overlordship at Bahrain, with whose ruler in 1861 a British treaty was negotiated. The validity of all previous accords was thereby recognised and complete abstention from slavery was agreed to, but the most important features of this instrument were, firstly, that all disputes with neighbours should be submitted to arbitration by Britain rather than to the more customary ordeal by battle; and, secondly, that British subjects, who should be freely allowed to live and trade in Bahrain, should be under the exclusive jurisdiction of the British Resident in the Gulf. The port of Kuwait, where Shaikh Sabah had succeeded Jubair in 1859, had, however, not yet begun to attract the attention of the British authorities, which was once more riveted on events in Oman. The Wahhabis had been called in by Thuwaini to deal with an insurrection led by his brother, Turki, at Suhar in 1862; but the Wahhabis, whose influence had been greatly increased by this incident, were on the other side two years later when ‘Azzan ibn Qais ibn Hamud, Governor of Rastaq, revolted against Thuwaini. Unfortunately a British-Indian subject was killed during the looting of the port of Sur; and the British Government, to prevent the possible extension of Wahhabi influence at the expense of its protégé, not only provided Thuwaini with guns and authorised the Trucial chiefs to assist him on land, but also bombarded the Wahhabi port of Qatif and demolished a small fort commanding the entrance to the harbour. The visit of Colonel Pelly, already referred to, provided an accommodation between British and Wahhabi interests, and Faisal agreed that attacks on Oman should cease on the understanding that the tribute hitherto payable should be punctually paid. Wahhabi attacks on the Gulf coast did, in fact, become less frequent after this date; and Oman, while retaining a considerable element of Wahhabis in its own interior population, gradually ceased to be politically dependent on the Government of Riyadh. In the same year an agreement was signed with Thuwaini for the construction of a telegraph line in his territories on both sides of the Gulf; but in 1866 the ruler of Oman was assassinated, it is said by his own son Salim, at Suhar. Turki, who had been in prison since his own rebellion a few years before, was now released by the British Agent, but Salim was recognised as his father's successor in the absence of direct evidence of his complicity in the latter's murder. Thuwaini was regretted by none, but his death was followed by disturbance and dissension throughout the country. In 1867 a British war-vessel alone saved Salim from defeat by Turki, who was sent off to live on a pension in India; but a year later 'Azzan ibn Qais rose at Rastaq, as he had done in the time of Thuwaini, and Salim had only just time to escape as the pretender entered Masqat; and on this occasion the British Government appears to have disinterested itself in his fate. After a vain appeal to Colonel Pelly he fled to Bandar 'Abbas. 'Azzan ruled in his place.

On the other side of Arabia, Muhammad ibn 'Aun had been superseded in the Amirate of Mecca in 1851 by 'Abdul Muttalib, the son of Ghalib, whom he himself had supplanted nearly a quarter of a century earlier. The new Amir had instructions to send his predecessor to Constantinople if he could; and this difficult task was accomplished by cunning where force would have been ineffective. Muhammad's two sons, who were on a visit to Jidda, were invited to inspect a Turkish man-of-war and were seized on arrival on board. The father gave himself up for his sons, and duly sojourned in the Ottoman capital, but when Burton was in the Hijaz a few years later he found "the wild men of Al-Hijaz still singing songs in honour of this Sharif." And time would yet vindicate him, for the tightening up of the slavery regulations and their application to Jidda caused a serious insurrection in the Hijaz, which 'Abdul Muttalib was powerless to control. He was accordingly deposed in 1856, and Muhammad ibn 'Aun was sent from Constantinople to take his place. The insurrection was soon reduced to impotence; but Muhammad was not destined to a long tenure of his post, and died in 1858, when he was succeeded by his son 'Abdullah. In the same year a serious riot occurred at Jidda in consequence of continued resentment at any interference with the slave trade, and two European consuls were killed. The Ottoman Government immediately sent a commission to Mecca to reorganise the whole administration of the country, and from this time the power of the Sharifian Amirate was effectively curbed for many years. Meanwhile in the Yaman, in spite of the reverse suffered by Taufiq Pasha at San'a in 1849, the Turks maintained their foothold in the Tihama; but it was always a precarious one, owing to the grave difficulty of supplying and reinforcing the army of occupation from the forces sent overland to the Hijaz, and arriving there in a state of general exhaustion. This trouble was, however, about to disappear, and with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 the Ottoman Government was able to send an army under Rauf Pasha by sea to the 'Asir and Yaman littoral to reduce various fortified places which had maintained a stubborn resistance to Turkish penetration. In 1872 San'a was entered again by a Turkish army under Mukhtar Pasha, and the Imam's authority was effectively curtailed.

Thus at the time when the blind and aged Faisal was gathered to his fathers the political map of Arabia had for all practical purposes been drawn on lines that would endure till the outbreak of the Great War nearly half a century later. In Central Arabia the dynasty of Ibn Rashid had established a virtual independence of Wahhabi control, while the Wahhabis ruled southern Najd, including the semi-independent Qasim and the Hasa with its ports. On the west the Turks held the Hijaz in a firm grip, and the Yaman with a semblance of authority, while Great Britain had Perim and Aden, with a shadowy influence in an undefined area of the latter's hinterland. And on the south and east fringes of the peninsula Britain was the arbiter of the destinies of Oman, the Trucial coast and the Islands of Bahrain. The Wahhabis held the rest of the Gulf coast—where their position would soon be challenged—except Kuwait, which appears to have been too insignificant to be anything but independent, though vaguely inclining to the Turks. And now for nearly thirty years the history of Arabia proper would be the history of its northern dynasty, whose seat was at Hail in Jabal Shammar.

CHAPTER VII

THE HOUSE OF IBN RASHID

It is strange indeed that up to the point which we have now reached in the history of Arabia the northern province of Najd, known as Jabal Shammar from the name of its dominant tribe, should have played so discreet and silent a part in the affairs of the peninsula. Nearer than any other district of Arabia to the great centres of civilisation of the Ottoman Empire, and lying respectively astride and athwart of the two great pilgrim routes from Baghdad and Damascus to the Hijaz, it might reasonably have been expected to take the lead in the politics of the desert. It had not done so, and the reason is perhaps to be sought in the very considerations which would lead one to expect a contrary result. The Arab is nomad and pastoral by force of circumstances, and not by choice. His racial eye has ever been on the "sown" beyond the desert, towards which he is ever and inevitably trending. The luxuries of civilisation are the goal of his endeavour. Its products and its pilgrims are his stock-in-trade. Arabia itself contains nothing worth coveting except the independence which its forbidding barrenness renders almost unassailable. Of what worth, then, is sovereignty in such a country, when dependence on wealthier neighbours connotes the advantages of material prosperity? It is only those who have no choice that glory in their insular fanaticism and praise liberty above comfort; yet they too are straining after the fleshpots. Those who started earlier and have got nearer to the object of their wanderings look more kindly on the promised land; nay, welcome its influence and even its rule, so its rule bring with it the comforts it produces. So, while the southern provinces, cut off from the world, tended to develop a national spirit on the rugged foundations of exclusive fanaticism, the north mocked at the vain shadow of political idealism and comfortably courted the smiles of a wealthy and indulgent mistress. Jabal Shammar accepted the vague and profitable suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire as one of the axioms of existence, and the Ottoman Empire regarded Jabal Shammar as a natural part of its clumsy, far-flung heritage, where Badawin tribesmen had to be punished or propitiated for the passage of the pilgrimage and where that was the Alpha and Omega of Turkish concern. Thus, when the Wahhabi storm burst towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Shammar country was neither organised as a national entity nor specifically included in the Ottoman scheme of imperial defence. It is not, therefore, surprising that it fell an easy victim to Wahhabi agression when it materialised, while the nearer Qasim, with its highly developed sense of civic republicanism, resisted more stoutly and remained for years a thorn in the side of Wahhabism or, at best, a precarious and dangerous dependency. A powerful tribe, trained to war from the cradle, succumbed almost without opposition at the first approach of danger; while a group of towns, divided against each other by civic rivalries and devoted to the arts of peace, could arm to defend their independence against an all-devouring imperialism as they had hitherto done only to protect their walls and palm-groves against marauding bands of nomad Badawin, and could maintain their cultural independence even in the hour of defeat. But the tribe would assert itself in the nineteenth century, and its ability to do so must be traced to its increasing isolation from the civilised world as the rapid development of mechanical and material prosperity widened the gulf between the desert and the sown. Hail is as far from Baghdad to-day as Baghdad is from London!

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the premier section of the Shammar tribe was the ‘Abda, whose leading sub-section was the Rabi‘a, which acknowledged the paramountcy of the Ja‘afira clan, whose premier families were those of Ibn ‘Ali and Ibn Rashid. The first of these two families was at the time in the ascendant, and its leader, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Muhsin ibn ‘Ali, was recognised as the patriarch of the Shammar tribe. ‘Ali ibn Rashid, the head of the other family, seems to have been on the best of terms with Muhammad and to have been inspired with no ambition to supplant him; but his sons, ‘Abdullah and ‘Ubaid, were both capable and ambitious. They were brought up in close comradeship with Muhammad’s son, ‘Isa, who in due course succeeded his father as head of the tribe, and, to cement the union of the two families in the traditional way of the Arabs, Muhammad gave his daughter in marriage to ‘Abdullah. The latter and his brother, ‘Ubaid, were also charged with the duty and lucrative privilege of commanding the escorts provided by the Shammar for the pilgrim and commercial caravans which passed across northern Arabia between ‘Iraq and the Hijaz.

‘Abdullah’s qualities soon gained for him a following among the tribesmen, and troubles arose between him and the titular chief, which about the year 1820 resulted in an open rupture. ‘Abdullah fled from Hail to the Euphrates country, where it is highly probable that he came into close contact with Turki ibn Sa‘ud, also a fugitive from the land of his ancestors during the years immediately succeeding the capture of Dar'iya by the Egyptians. And, when Turki found it possible to return to Najd to repair the shattered fortunes of his house, 'Abdullah gladly volunteered his services in his cause. A close friendship now developed between him and Faisal, Turki's eldest son and the commander of his forces during the campaigns set on foot for the recovery of the lost provinces of the old empire. Jabal Shammar, largely owing to 'Abdullah's influence with the tribes and martial skill, was compelled to acknowledge once more the suzerainty of the Wahhabi ruler, which the Egyptian conquest of Najd had thrown into abeyance; but no change was made in the administrative arrangements of Hail, where 'Isa now ruled in place of his father. 'Abdullah was content to bide his time and to follow the flag of his new sovereign; and in 1834 he was actively engaged with Faisal in the reduction of the Hasa when news arrived of Turki's assassination. 'Abdullah, with his Shammar following, accompanied Faisal in the forced march which took him to the neighbourhood of Riyadh before the usurper of his father's throne had had time to consolidate his position. And it was 'Abdullah who undertook the dangerous task of forcing an entrance into the fortress, whose master dominated the situation. With forty men he succeeded in this venture, and slew Mishari, as already recorded, with his own hand. Faisal was proclaimed ruler of Najd, and 'Abdullah was rewarded for his distinguished service by appointment to the long-coveted post of Governor of Hail and Chief of the Shammar, in place of Salih ibn Muhsin ibn 'Ali, who had succeeded 'Isa. Thus, after fourteen years of absence, 'Abdullah returned to Hail, where he was enthusiastically welcomed by the people and warmly supported by his brother, ‘Ubaid, who now became his right-hand man in the task of founding what would prove to be a dynasty. Salih ibn ‘Ali fled to the Egyptians in the Qasim, but was overtaken and slain on the way.

‘Abdullah does not appear at this time to have had any definite idea of secession from the Wahhabi state, with which, indeed, his fortunes were closely linked owing to the continuing Egyptian occupation of the Qasim and other districts. And when the Egyptians, a few years later, resumed their operations against Faisal, with the results already recorded, their plans included the subjection of Hail and the restoration of ‘Isa ibn ‘Ali as its Governor under themselves. It appears that ‘Isa had left Hail on its reduction by the Wahhabis in 1827 and had thrown in his lot with the Egyptians, leaving his uncle, Salih, to represent the family under Wahhabi rule. In 1837 he returned with Turkish troops, and ‘Abdullah, unable to maintain his position, left his capital with ‘Ubaid and took refuge among the nomad sections of the ‘Abda. On the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, however, ‘Abdullah made another bid for authority, and set up a rival throne at Qufar, only a dozen miles south-west of Hail. Khurshid Pasha, however, determined to enforce respect for Egyptian sovereignty, and in 1838 advanced on Jabal Shammar from his headquarters at Madina. ‘Abdullah went down to Mustajidda to make his peace with the Egyptians, and Khurshid was duly impressed both by his gifts and his personality. It was eventually agreed that ‘Abdullah should become ruler of Hail in return for acknowledgment of Egyptian suzerainty; and ‘Isa, fleeing to Madina, was overtaken and slain at Sulaimi by ‘Ubaid. The house of Ibn ‘Ali was now for all practical purposes at an end, though it continued to exist, and exists to this day, as nominally the premier family of the Shammar. The house of Ibn Rashid supplanted it in a heritage which it would hold for all but a century, though not peacefully.

'Abdullah was an astute politician as well as a warrior, and managed with consummate skill to steer his new state between the Scylla and Charybdis of Wahhabi and Egyptian overlordship, acknowledging both, but avoiding all concern with their quarrels and going his own way wherever that way pointed to the extension and consolidation of his own power. Technically his position was one of dependence on the Wahhabi state, which was itself under Egyptian domination more or less effective according to the varying circumstances of the time. He never actively helped the Egyptians against his old friend, while on Faisal's return from captivity in 1843 he did help him to re-establish his position against the Turkish nominee. Otherwise he fended for himself, with satisfactory results, the prosperous oases of the Jauf district in the north being occupied and laid under tribute, while in the western desert also, in co-operation with or on behalf of Khurshid Pasha, he established an ascendancy over the Harb and other tribes along the Hijaz border. His growing influence and popularity combined with the more substantial proceeds of raids and Egyptian generosity to raise his status in fact, though not in name, to one of independent sovereignty; and such a position, lest it might attract the attention of Wahhabi jealousy, necessitated certain material safeguards, which under 'Abdullah's supervison took the form of the extension and strengthening of the Barzan fortress, originally built by Muhammad ibn 'Ali, and of the city walls. In all he did he owed much to the support and unswerving loyalty of his brother, 'Ubaid, whose warlike services continued at the disposal of his successor when, in 1847, he died and was followed in the lordship of Hail by his eldest son, Talal. It is noteworthy that ‘Abdullah, in effect the first of his dynasty, was the only one of a long line of rulers of Hail to quit this world through the ordinary portals of natural death except the greatest of them, Muhammad.

Hail was at this time, as has already been indicated, nominally a part of the Wahhabi dominions, and Talal, on his accession to the throne, sought the formal endorsement of Faisal, which was readily granted and involved no obligations of a practical kind. Jabal Shammar was, in fact, an independent state, and Talal was a man of peace, who devoted himself to the restoration of prosperity to an area which had been distracted by years of war and unrest, while his uncle undertook the congenial task of hunting down and suppressing the marauding bands which had made the Shammar country unsafe for the passage of pilgrims. Hail soon became an important commercial entrepôt for the Badawin, and the surrounding oases were restored to their old-time prosperity by the clearing of disused wells and the construction of fort-like farmsteads to protect the palms. Territorial expansion also marked these years, being directly occasioned by the refusal of Jauf to pay the tribute which had been imposed on it by ‘Abdullah. Dissensions between local chiefs of the Ruwala had resulted in the triumph of the party hostile to the Rashidite representative—‘Abdullah had left the administration of the district in local hands—and in 1853 it was found necessary to intervene forcibly in the affairs of the province to save it from open revolt. ‘Ubaid, accompanied by Talal’s brother Mit‘ab, had little difficulty in subduing the disturbers of the peace, but two years later another rebellion against Rashidite authority necessitated an expedition, whose success was followed by the establishment of direct administration under a Governor appointed from Hail and residing with a strong garrison in the mediæval fortress of Marid, dominating the settlement of Jauf itself. The forts at Sakaka, Qara and other places were destroyed; and the province for the first time became an effective adjunct of the Rashidite dominions. The western oases of Taima and Khaibar were also occupied, and the tribes of the north-west were compelled to accept the yoke of Hail. At the same time Talal maintained a loyal attitude towards his nominal suzerain at Riyadh, and rejected all the overtures made to him by Zamil al Sulaim for joint action against the Wahhabi, whose closing years were marked by constant though desultory operations under his son ‘Abdullah against the powerful oasis of ‘Anaiza. Not only did Talal give Zamil no help or encouragement in his designs, but he made public exhibition of his loyalty by going in person to Riyadh on one occasion with the annual present of bloodstock, which was the only outward and visible sign of tributary status. In the Wahhabi country he is said to have been poisoned, though not fatally, and, sickening on his return to Hail, he sent to Baghdad for a Persian doctor of high reputation. The malady, he declared, was not immediately dangerous, but would gradually attack and consume his mind. Such a prospect was too appalling to be long endured, and on March 11th, 1868, the citizens of Hail were profoundly shocked to hear that their sovereign had ended his days by his own hand. The Muslim punishment of inevitable and uncommutable hell-fire for the suicide seemed to Talal's contemporaries too harsh a penalty for a life so well spent, if so tragically ended; and attempts have been made to represent his death as being due to an accident during the examination of a new pistol. He was admittedly alone when he died, and it was a shot from his own pistol that ended his days; who then shall decide the truth of the matter? but the verdict of history must be based on the circumstances of the case, and there seems no reason to reject the evidence for suicide, which has been woven into the legends of Jabal Shammar as the curse that was hereafter to pursue the House of Rashid to its bitter end. Talal was only forty-five years of age, and had reigned twenty-one years through a critical period with conspicuous success. The eldest of his six sons, Bandar, was only seventeen at the time, and the throne passed to his brother, Mit'ab, the second of the three sons of 'Abdullah, whom the people accepted by the customary procedure of acclamation as the most suitable member of the family to rule. In spite, however, of an amulet worn on his arm as an assurance against lead, the reign of Mit'ab, of whom Doughty some few years later heard in Hail as a prince of mild and courtly disposition, was not destined to be long. His brother's sons, Bandar and Badr, disregarding all his efforts to conciliate them, planned to assassinate him, and, having duly fashioned a supply of silver bullets to defeat the amulet, withdrew one day in January 1869 from the public audience held according to custom at the great gate of the Barzan to a crenelated roof-terrace commanding the scene. Mit'ab fell to the second bullet, fired by Badr, and Bandar reigned in his stead, though only for a short time. The aged 'Ubaid, accompanied by Muhammad, the third son of 'Abdullah, and other members of the family, fled to Riyadh, lest the conspiracy of Bandar might be intended to embrace other possible aspirants to the throne; but the exertion of such a journey proved too much for an old man of eighty, and 'Ubaid died in the Wahhabi capital, having served his country long and faithfully with never a thought of personal ambition. He was a warrior, and also a poet of considerable merit, though his son, Hamud, who served Muhammad as he himself had served 'Abdullah and Talal, is reputed to have excelled him as a maker of ballads. Muhammad was not likely to leave his brother's death unavenged, and Bandar was conscious that he would have a large following in the tribe if he chose to contest the throne, and would probably secure the support of the Wahhabis. He deemed it expedient, therefore, to make overtures to so dangerous a rival, and Muhammad himself was willing enough to return to Hail, though it is probable that he merely contemplated such a step with a view to squaring accounts with the usurper. He did not, in fact, return immediately, preferring that Hamud and the rest of his following should precede him in case Bandar might be contemplating treachery, but appears to have proceeded to the Hijaz by arrangement with Bandar to take charge of a pilgrim caravan which was about to start across Arabia for 'Iraq. There was nothing unusual in this, as he had previously spent most of his time under his father's and brother's régimes in acting as caravan-leader, both for pilgrims and for merchants trading between 'Iraq and Hail; and had acquired a great reputation as a prudent and influential guide, while amassing for himself a substantial fortune out of the customary toll of a shilling a camel of every caravan entrusted to him.

On this occasion there rode in the pilgrim-train from Mecca a Persian divine of high standing, who had been presented there with a sword and scabbard of great antiquity and value; and one night as he slept in the desert he saw a vision of the angel of the Lord, who stood before him saying: "Behold! there rides with you a king; take the sword which you had in the holy city and gird it upon him; and upon whomsoever you shall gird it, he shall have a kingdom and the victory all the days of his life. Seek him out, therefore." Thereupon the angel departed, leaving the holy man sore puzzled at the meaning of his vision, except that on pain of the divine wrath he must part with his sword to some person in the same caravan. And so, as they travelled over the desert, his mind dwelt on the problem, and he found none therein obviously intended by the vision; but when the caravan approached Najaf after the successful accomplishment of the long and arduous journey, and camped for the last night for the payment of dues and the usual leave-takings between guides and guided, the Shaikh approached Muhammad, who had treated him with much kindliness and courtesy by the way, and thanked him. "But what," said he, "can I give you in token of my gratitude, who have nothing but my holiness, praise be to God? Yet I have with me a sword which they gave me at God's holy city, and who am I that I should need a sword? while you may use it for the protection of the pilgrims journeying to God's House. Accept it of me and my blessing thereon, for thou art king indeed." Muhammad, whose ambitions lay buried in his heart, accepted the gift and noted the omen; and when he had safely delivered the pilgrims at the gates of Najaf, his Shammar camel-men and the Dhafir, who had joined them, loaded up their camels with rice for the merchants and princes of Hail, as was the custom; and the caravan set out on its return journey. When it was still a day's march off the capital, Muhammad sent messengers forward with greetings for his nephew, Bandar the ruling Prince, and with more personal messages of discreet inquiry to Hamud. At break of day the caravan set forth, and afar off the great castle amid the palm-groves came into view, and lo! a great cavalcade streaming across the plain to greet the returning host. At its head rode Bandar himself, and Hamud and Badr and others of the royal house; and the meeting was momentous between uncle and nephew, who had not met since the murder that had made one a prince and the other a fugitive. Mistrust and suspicion bristled on both sides, while Hamud, loyal to his friend, found means to warn him with the sign of a finger drawn across the throat that his life was not secure. At the same time Bandar liked not the look of so many Dhafir about his uncle, a tribe divided from his own by many a blood-feud. The greetings were short, and Bandar demanded an explanation of the presence of the Dhafir. That in itself was a declaration of war, and Muhammad sought only a few precious minutes of time by returning a mild answer. As he spoke he dismounted from his riding-camel—Bandar being on horseback—and borrowed a horse from one of the townsmen as if to round up the caravan for the entry into Hail. No sooner was he mounted, however, than he closed on Bandar in the throng, and in a second the Shaikh's sword was in the Prince's vitals. His slaves fled, and Badr with them, in a general *sauve qui peut,* while Muhammad and Hamud raced for the city gate, and for the moment closed it against all ingress and egress. Badr was pursued and slain in the desert; the other brothers of Bandar, mere children of various ages, were butchered in cold blood to forestall the blood-feuds of the future; but Bandar's only child, Majid, an infant born of the wife of Mit'ab, whom Bandar had married after murdering her husband, whose infant son, 'Abdul 'Aziz, she still carried at her breast, was for some strange reason spared. So the tragedy was complete, which was, in fact, the dawn of an era accounted one of the brightest, most peaceful and most prosperous in the annals of Arabia; the curse of the suicide Talal might well seem to have been fully expiated by the violent end of all his offspring. Muhammad, "having committed crimes which before were not known in the world," as Doughty was told in the Qasim less than a decade later, faced the world of Hail with peace and a sword in either hand; the trembling people, dumbfounded at the horror of the day, and fearing more for the morrow than weeping for the irrevocable past, slunk timidly from their houses into the public street where, over against the Barzan gate, their new ruler sat in the ruler's seat. It was peace they chose, and perhaps none had played so big a part in the making of that choice as Hamud, who begged the citizens of Hail to give thanks to God that the feud was still confined within the limits of a single, though royal, household, and to avoid any action that might increase it to a general massacre. The bloody chapter was closed; and Muhammad, born to no throne, sat on the throne of his father; "and never," as Doughty has written, "was the government, they say, in more sufficient handling." His territories at this time extended roughly from the line of the Syrian pilgrim-route (thus including the oases of Khaibar and Taima) to the Euphrates marches, where the Dhafir owed allegiance to the Pasha of Baghdad, and from the northern frontier of the Qasim to the Wadi Sirhan and Jauf. Doughty estimated the total population under his rule at about 34,000 souls, which would seem to be well below the real mark, though there are no statistics for an exact computation; at any rate, Hail alone must to-day have well over 20,000 inhabitants. Similarly the revenue of the state was reckoned by Doughty to have been about £40,000 a year at the time of his visit, and its expenditure some £13,000: both figures would be below the mark rather than above it, and it would seem that the shilling toll on all camel caravans enjoying the protection of Muhammad's "face" would alone account for half the suggested total revenue. Doughty was, of course, concerned only to point out how small was the prize for the spilling of so much blood; it was small indeed, but it was the lump that leavened Arabia for a generation.

The accession of Muhammad ibn Rashid to the throne of Jabal Shammar brings us down to Christmas Day, 1869, when the aged Faisal had been dead two years, leaving two elder sons to contest his throne and, in the process, to shake the newly-restored Wahhabi state to its very foundations. It was the eldest, ‘Abdullah, who was hailed as ruler in his father's place; but Sa‘ud, who, as we have already seen, had long been acting as Faisal's Viceroy of the southern provinces, left no room for doubt as to his intentions from the outset. But the townsfolk of the great oases, which had formerly experienced the full desolation of perpetual war and had latterly prospered under the shadow of peace, were by no means inclined to encourage a dynastic war for the barren privilege of ruling them. Sa‘ud therefore had to seek support and assistance in quarters where peace was less attractive, and it was to the powerful tribe of the ‘Ajman, with whose chiefs he appears to have contracted matrimonial alliances, that he turned in the hour of his decision to plunge his country into civil war rather than stomach the rule of his hated brother. The ‘Ajman, hailing originally from the Yaman, where they formed part of the great tribal confederacy of Yam, ranged at this time over the whole of the eastern desert from the environs of Kuwait to the fringes of the Great South Desert of Rub‘ al Khali; in power and prestige they ranked second only to the Bani Khalid, and it was naturally in the Hasa that they were best placed to assist Sa‘ud in his designs. The allies were joined by the Murra tribe of the great desert and by ‘Isa al Khalifa, ruler of Bahrain, in a concerted attack on Hufuf, where the Wahhabi Governor, Ahmad al Sudairi, held out for some time, while ‘Abdullah and Muhammad, the third son of Faisal, gathered forces for his relief. The force that came was too weak to accomplish its object, and Hufuf surrendered; but ‘Abdullah decided to strike a blow at the pretender's main force, then encamped near the hill and wells of Juda. His army was decisively defeated with heavy losses; and ‘Abdullah himself became a fugitive, at first among the tribes, then in turn at ‘Anaiza and Hail, and then again among the tribes of Mutair and Subai‘, whence in despair he appealed for assistance and intervention to the new Wali of Baghdad, Midhat Pasha, who had come to ‘Iraq in 1870 with great ideas of administrative reorganisation and still greater ideas of imperial expansion. Meanwhile Sa‘ud encountered no resistance in his march on the Wahhabi capital, where he was duly accepted as ruler at the end of the same year (1870). The provinces adopted an uncertain attitude, preferring to wait and see how the situation developed; and at Riyadh, Sa‘ud, for all his popularity with the tribes, or rather perhaps because of it, found the people out of sympathy with him, and had to maintain his position with a substantial show of force. In the year following his entry into the capital he was, indeed, expelled, though only temporarily, by his father's brother, ‘Abdullah ibn Turki; but the greatest blow to his prestige fell in the east, where he lost the province of Hasa irrevocably to the Turks. This important tract consisted of a remarkable group of exceedingly fertile oases imbedded in an enormous area of utterly sterile desert, stretching from the central ring of the Arabian sands to the shore of the Persian Gulf. In the nature of things it could never be really independent, and must ever be the object of the rival claims of the lords of the desert and the lords of the sea. In fact, and in the absence of any marked lordship of the sea except so far as it lay in the hands of European Powers who shrank instinctively from barren adventures into the interior, the Hasa, under its local chiefs of the Bani Khalid, had in the early part of the eighteenth century not only maintained a semblance of effective independence, but had also gathered the lordless desert under its wing. With effective means of communication such a situation might have crystallised into a permanent political entity with the seaports controlling the interior which they supplied, but that would have demanded, besides good communications with the interior, some measure of command of the sea. The ‘Arai‘ar dynasty could boast neither, and the turbulent independence of the desert developed, as we have seen, under the accidental inspiration of a religious motive, into a state with a definite political consciousness. Its first attentions were devoted to the coastal province, which the feeble imperial pretensions of Turkish ‘Iraq without any substantial backing of sea-power left at the mercy of the invaders. Hasa thus became a province of Najd, and later came under Turkish rule only by conquest from Najd from the west, and not, as one might have expected, by direct conquest from the east. It continued to be held thus from the west as part of Najd, and with the weakening of the Turkish hold on Central Arabia it reverted naturally enough to the rulers of Najd, instead of remaining an integral part of the Ottoman Empire held from the east and the sea. To some extent this was certainly due to the accident of British intervention to discourage or prevent any Turkish occupation of the islands of Bahrain, but it was more directly due to the simple fact that the Turks never had an effective navy in the Gulf.

Midhat Pasha, it is true, had no better navy than those of his predecessors who had harboured designs on the Hasa; but he was favoured by the reversion of Najd itself to the state which more than a century before had enabled the ‘Arai‘ar shaikhs to impose their dominion on the interior. It was no difficult task to filch the Hasa away from quarrelling Wahhabis, and the Bani Khalid were ready enough to accept the distant suzerainty of Turkey in place of the more pressing attentions of Najd. Midhat Pasha was, however, too thorough in all he did to neglect the precautions necessary for the success of any venture in the desert. The assistance of the Muntafiq and their chief, Nasir ibn Sa‘dun, was duly enlisted, and the growing importance of Kuwait was recognised by the enrolment of its chief, ‘Abdullah ibn Sabah, as an ally. Nafidh Pasha was placed in command of the expedition which was launched at the Hasa by sea and land in June 1871. The main force proceeded by sea to ‘Uqair under the Kuwait chief, while his son, Mubarak, who now figures in history for the first time, led the Badawin contingent on land. ‘Abdullah ibn Sa‘ud and the Bani Khalid joined the Turkish forces, and the various settlements of the province were occupied without difficulty, mainly owing to the defection of the ‘Ajman and Murra from the cause of Sa‘ud. The Hasa was now formally included among the provinces of the Turkish Empire under the grandiloquent designation of Najd, which doubtless indicated Midhat's intention of extending his influence into the interior. He did not, however, remain long enough at Baghdad to proceed with this design, and his successor, Rauf Pasha, contented himself with a nominal hold on Najd through the refugee ‘Abdullah, whose youngest brother, ‘Abdul Rahman, was sent to represent him at Baghdad in the double capacity of envoy and hostage, and there remained till 1874.

Meanwhile the loss of Hasa and the defection of his best tribes were serious blows to the prestige and strength of Sa‘ud, while the powerful ‘Ataiba tribe began to encroach on his western districts. An attempt to reassert himself resulted in a crushing defeat at the hands of Muslit ibn Rubai‘an, the ‘Ataiba leader, at the wells of Sakha amid the western sands. Sa‘ud himself was seriously wounded, but got back to Riyadh, where, after a long illness, he died in 1877, to make room once more for ‘Abdullah, who had meanwhile entered into negotiations with his brother's sons and effected some sort of reconciliation. The net result of the strife of the two brothers had been the loss of Hasa to a power that might at any moment be a danger to Najd itself, and the general weakening of the central authority in relation to the more powerful tribes. The Qasim, with its two great cities of ‘Anaiza and Buraida, was independent, as also was Jabal Shammar, where at the time of Sa‘ud's death Muhammad was in the eighth year of his reign, and would soon be visited by Charles Doughty. He had spent the interval in building up for himself a strong position in the north, while for the time being leaving Najd to its own devices. The tragedies which had placed Muhammad on the throne had been witnessed, in part at least, by the chief of the Ruwala tribe, Sattam ibn Sha‘lan, who had been on a visit to Mit‘ab at the time of his murder, and was actually sitting at his side when the fatal shots were fired. He had immediately left Hail to look after itself and gone to improve the shining hour in the area which interested him more intimately. The Ruwala, supported by the Turks, gradually brought pressure to bear on the marches of the Jauf district, while at the beginning of 1870 Turkish troops were sent from Ma‘an to effect the actual occupation of the chief oases. They were joined by a few malcontents, but the majority remained faithful to Muhammad in spite of a threat of bombardment by the artillery which had accompanied the force. Muhammad was meanwhile hurrying to the relief of his important dependency, and arrived in the neighbourhood very soon after the Turks, whose commander he proceeded to buy off with lavish presents. An arrangement was patched up which would enable the Turkish general to report a successful issue of his expedition, and a small garrison of Algerian troops was left at Jauf in token of nominal Ottoman rule; but the exactions of these troops soon produced a local rebellion, before which the Algerians fled, leaving Jauf and its district to the Shammar Prince. Muhammad now extended his influence over the whole of Wadi Sirhan and to the outskirts of the fertile province of Hauran, while he even laid Palmyra under tribute, and became, in fact, the undisputed arbiter of the whole of the northern desert. He had effected more by diplomacy than by actual fighting, and in spite of the bloody trail of his accession, it was peace that he spread over the face of Arabia. It was largely through him that a reconciliation was arranged between the sons of Sa‘ud and ‘Abdullah to enable the latter to resume his throne on his brother's death; and though he gave ‘Abdullah no assistance in his campaigns against the Hasa and Qasim, he never himself took advantage of his weakness, and in the end only superseded him on the throne of Arabia when he had proved not only unworthy of it, but utterly unable to maintain himself on it.

As we have seen, ‘Abdullah had returned to his throne after an interval of seven years on his brother’s death in 1877, as the result of a patched-up truce between the remaining members of the various leading branches of the family. His brothers, Muhammad and ‘Abdul Rahman, had not perhaps been altogether innocent of designs on the chief power for themselves, and had taken part in various skirmishes, notably at Tharmida, preceding the final truce; but they appear now to have sunk their own ambitions in the general interests of peace to acknowledge the superior claims of ‘Abdullah. The sons of Sa‘ud had also acquiesced in this arrangement, while reserving their right of free action in the light of further developments by retiring to the safe refuge of Kharj, where in general they lent their support to the measures now set on foot for the restoration of the ruler’s authority throughout the long-harassed provinces and tribal areas. Two years of serious famine had greatly added to the embarrassments of the country, and there was a general desire for peace, but peace was not easily attainable while the Turks remained in the Hasa, and thither ‘Abdullah now turned his attention. Before the death of Sa‘ud there had been disturbances in this province beginning in 1873, when Nasir Pasha, the head of the Muntafiq tribe (who, after the departure of Midhat Pasha from Baghdad had been appointed the first Wali of the newly constituted province of Basra), sent down a force under his son, Falih, and Bazi‘ ibn ‘Arai‘ar of the old Bani Khaliḍ dynasty to scatter the insurgents and restore order. Bazi‘ was appointed Qaim-maqam or Governor of the sub-province of Najd, and immediately began to develop ambitions of a wider range. He was, however, not popular either with the townsfolk or with the Badawin, and a general desire began to show itself for a return of Wahhabi rule. Meanwhile ‘Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal had been released from the hospitality of the Ottoman Government, and had immediately taken up arms in the cause of his brother in the Hasa, where he was soon joined by the enemies of the régime in power. Bazi‘ was besieged in Hufuf, and matters were going badly for him, when Nasir Pasha appeared on the scene, and ‘Abdul Rahman's Badawin auxiliaries made themselves scarce, leaving the young Prince to fend for himself. He left the field open to the more powerful Muntafiq chief, who dethroned Bazi‘ in 1875, and nominated his own son, Mazyad, to the governorship of the province. In the course of his operations, however, he had taken advantage of the situation to loot on a large scale, and on his return to Basra he found himself invited to Constantinople, where he duly died. Mazyad managed to maintain himself in the Hasa largely owing to the dissensions that occupied both the ruler of Najd and the pretender; and the opportunity for a Wahhabi restoration passed irrevocably away. ‘Abdullah, on resuming the throne of Riyadh, found himself unable to make any further impression on the Hasa, and turned his attention to the Qasim. Zamil of ‘Anaiza was not disinclined to accept the nominal suzerainty of Riyadh, but the insistence of ‘Abdullah on the return of the original ‘Alaiyan family to chief power at Buraida resulted in a firm stand by the actual Governor, Hasan al Muhanna, who appealed successfully to Muhammad ibn Rashid. With the doubtful loyalty of the sons of Sa‘ud in the province of Kharj behind him, and the powerful, though not unfriendly, Muhammad ibn Rashid opposing any effective extension of his authority in the Qasim, ‘Abdullah found himself unable to cope with the situation, and made overtures to Muhammad, from which peace resulted in 1879 on the basis of his renunciation of all claim to overlordship in the Qasim. This result gave little satisfaction in the Wahhabi country, and ‘Abdullah found his prestige seriously undermined in favour of his brother's sons, the leading spirit among whom was Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud, nicknamed Al Ghazlan. To restore his position he was compelled to take the field nominally for the extirpation of sedition among his tribes and provinces, though it was actually a case of veiled hostilities directed against the growing power of Muhammad ibn Rashid.

The events of the next eight years are exceedingly difficult to follow through the maze of conflicting accounts which have arisen out of local legends and unrecorded memories of people still living or but recently dead. It is certain, however, that the Wahhabi territories now experienced a period of chaotic unrest, through which runs almost discernibly a strand of intrigue emanating from the astute brain of the ruler of Jabal Shammar, who began more and more openly to take charge of a situation of which ‘Abdullah was rapidly losing control, while the latter, to maintain his position among the still loyal sections of his people, had to make a show of opposing the growing and much-feared influence of Ibn Rashid. It was an extraordinary situation, in which neither of the protagonists, who were allied by the marriage of ‘Abdullah to Muhammad's sister, desired to appear in open conflict with the other; while the one coveted the throne which the other was increasingly unable to hold.

The settlement of the Qasim problem in a sense unfavourable to the pretensions of the Wahhabi induced unrest in the neighbouring province of Sudair, which resulted in the rebellion of the oasis settlement of Majma‘a in 1881 and its appeal to Muhammad for assistance. ‘Abdullah was at the time encamped at Dharma with his army, including a large contingent of ‘Ataiba, who had recently opened a campaign against the Harb tribe subject to Ibn Rashid, and had harried the country-side up to the confines of Jabal Shammar itself. What his intentions were is not very clear, though he probably contemplated lending general support to the ‘Ataiba and also to ‘Anaiza and other parts of the Qasim which were resisting passively the pressure of the Shammar ruler exerted indirectly through the Governor of Buraida. The news of the revolt in Sudair drew ‘Abdullah in that direction, but he turned off abruptly to Riyadh, fearing an attempt on the capital by his nephews, when he heard that Ibn Rashid was on the march to the support of Majma‘a with an army of Harb and Shammar and a contingent from Buraida.

Muhammad did no more at Majma‘a than appoint a new Governor in place of the Wahhabi official who had withdrawn, but he attacked Zilfi, and thus became in fact the overlord of territory definitely included in the Wahhabi realm. ‘Abdullah spent a year in gathering the forces requisite for the restoration of his authority in Sudair, and in 1883 marched on Majma‘a, which promptly appealed to Muhammad and Buraida. A battle took place in the plain of Hamada under the cliffs of the Tuwaiq plateau, where Muhammad surprised and annihilated the Wahhabi forces, and from the battlefield sent peremptory orders to the Governors of the adjacent districts to come in and make their submission. This they duly did, and Muhammad appointed Governors of his own in their places, while ‘Abdullah fled to Riyadh and opened negotiations with the victor. His brother, Muhammad ibn Faisal, was the envoy entrusted with the task, and success, apparently complete, attended his mission. At any rate he returned not only with gifts for ‘Abdullah, but also with Muhammad’s acknowledgment of the latter’s authority both in Sudair and Washm. His intervention, said the Shammar ruler, had only been in the general interest of peace; that restored, the Wahhabi monarch was free to resume his position. But the peace of these provinces was broken beyond repair, and ‘Abdullah’s efforts to re-establish the forms of regular government served only to provoke sporadic outbursts which he was powerless to control. His impotence was not lost on the sons of his brother Sa‘ud, who now took it upon themselves to support the ‘Ataiba in their campaign of aggression against Ibn Rashid for the furtherance of their pretensions to the Wahhabi throne. Within a few months of the affair at Hamada the two armies met at the watering of ‘Arwa, where Ibn Rashid gained a decisive victory. Disappointed in this venture, the sons of Sa‘ud turned openly on the unfortunate ‘Abdullah in 1884, and, effecting an entry into Riyadh, soon had him a prisoner. He had meanwhile appealed to Muhammad for assistance against the designs of his nephews, and the Shammar Prince now had his great opportunity. He hastened down with a strong force, announcing on the way that he had come to save the lawful monarch against the pretenders. The Wahhabi provinces joined him on the march, but the capital adopted a cautious attitude towards his apparent good-will. A deputation, headed by ‘Abdul Rahman, met him outside the gates of Riyadh to inquire his purpose; he assured it that he had come only to release ‘Abdullah from prison, and that he had no desire but to see the House of Sa‘ud in effective control of its territories.

An agreement was made on this basis, and the pretenders, bowing to a combination of force and local pressure, withdrew by arrangement to Kharj. Muhammad now showed his true colours, and, in effect, occupied Riyadh as a conqueror. ‘Abdullah was released from prison, it is true, but he was sent with his brother, ‘Abdul Rahman, and ten other members of the family, including ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, the fourth and youngest son of Sa‘ud ibn Faisal, to Hail; while Salim ibn Subhan was appointed Governor of Riyadh. The Wahhabi state was for the second time at an end. ‘Abdullah the Second had lost the fruits of his fathers’ endeavour to the new Arabian dynasty of the north, as ‘Abdullah the First had lost the empire created by his ancestors to the new and vigorous power that had arisen in Egypt. The Wahhabi cause would yet prosper again in adversity, and time would avenge the wrongs wrought on it by its own champions; but it would need a second ‘Abdul ‘Aziz to re-create the empire that had been built up by the first, and he was already a child in his father’s house, too young to understand the tragedy which had assailed the state and faith of his ancestors and, to all seeming, not destined to a throne in the presence of the grown sons of an uncle older than his father. Meanwhile Muhammad ibn Rashid was lord of all the land that his own father’s patron had ruled, with the exception of the Hasa, which was irretrievably lost. When Muhammad sent ‘Abdullah a prisoner to Hail, fifty years had elapsed since Faisal sent ‘Abdullah to Hail as its Governor; and in that space much blood had been spilled in Arabia. For some years she would know peace and good government.

These events seem to have taken place in the year 1885. In the following year Salim ibn Subhan was appealed to by certain parties aggrieved by the tyranny of the sons of Sa'ud in Kharj, and went down in person to settle the matter. The defenders adopted an independent and obstinate attitude, which displeased or perhaps alarmed the Rashidite Governor, and the offenders paid for their temerity with their lives. Muhammad, Sa'd and 'Abdullah, the three sons of Sa'ud in Kharj, were seized and done to death in cold blood, and their families were sent to Hail. The people clamoured to Muhammad for the punishment of his too zealous Governor, and the clamour was too loud and too just to be disregarded: Salim was discharged and one Fahhad ibn Rakhis became Governor in his stead.

Some time later 'Abdullah became seriously ill at Hail, and was permitted by Muhammad to return with 'Abdul Rahman to Riyadh, where, it would seem, he was to become Governor on behalf of Ibn Rashid. The latter must indeed have felt secure in his new realm to risk such an appointment, but it is possible that he never really intended it to materialise. At any rate 'Abdullah partially solved the problem by succumbing to his malady at the end of November 1889; and when 'Abdul Rahman claimed fulfilment of the promise made to his brother in his own favour, he only provoked a retort discourteous. The gentle-mannered Fahhad was withdrawn from the governorship of Riyadh and replaced by the tyrant Salim ibn Subhan; for perhaps Muhammad divined a greater danger in the youngest of Faisal's sons than he had had reason to fear in 'Abdullah. Salim at any rate did not propose to let that danger continue, and in July 1890, on the occasion of the Great Feast (celebrating the accomplishment of the pilgrimage), he paid a state visit to the members of the Sa'ud family. 'Abdul Rahman, who as the head of the family received the distinguished visitor alone, had been warned that the extermination of his whole family was contemplated, and this warning was confirmed by Salim's request that all the male members of the Sa'ud family should appear to hear a message of greeting from Ibn Rashid. As in duty bound, the whole family entered the room, and no sooner had they done so than they themselves fell upon the astonished Governor and his attendants, killed many of them, and for the moment were masters of Riyadh. Now at this time Zamil and the people of 'Anaiza were in a state of suppressed revolt against Ibn Rashid, partly owing to his undisguised preference for the rival town of Buraida, but probably more largely owing to the deliberate diversion of the pilgrim caravans to the exclusive use of the route through Hail, which had now begun to prosper greatly by its practical monopoly of the carrying of and purveying to pilgrims. Zamil immediately sent to 'Abdul Rahman, placing himself and all the strength of 'Anaiza at his disposal for a sustained rising against Muhammad; but the latter moved too quickly, and was able to buy off Zamil by fair promises on his way to Riyadh before the reply of 'Abdul Rahman was received. The latter, now isolated, determined to resist to the end, but after a siege of forty days was forced by public opinion to parley with the besieger; his elder brother, Muhammad, who appears to have acquiesced in a subordinate rôle, was sent with the chief-priest 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul Latif, the great-great-grandson of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, to negotiate with Ibn Rashid, and with them went 'Abdul Rahman's own son, 'Abdul 'Aziz, a child of ten, who thus appears for the first time in the history of the Arabia he would one day rule as king.

It was agreed, in view of the stalemate to which the siege had been reduced, that 'Abdul Rahman should remain as Governor of the central province of ‘Aridh, while acknowledging the supreme authority of Ibn Rashid. And with that Muhammad retired; but he was now confronted with the Qasim demanding the fulfilment of his promises. He prevaricated, and Zamil took the field in January 1891. The Shammar forces took up a position on the plain of Qara‘a westward of Buraida, while Zamil held the line of sandhills at the edge of the Khubub district overlooking the plain. Ibn Rashid's cavalry were again and again beaten back, and Zamil was secure as long as he stayed where he was, but he was no tactician, and Muhammad lured him out into the plain by a feint of flight. The Shammar horsemen turned on their pursuers, and the battle of Mulaida was won and lost. Zamil himself and his second son, ‘Ali, were killed, as also Khalid al Sulaim, whose son now governs ‘Anaiza, and about a thousand of the people of Qasim and their supporters, including some from Riyadh. It proved to be the last twitch of the dying Wahhabi state. ‘Abdul Rahman was on his way to join Zamil when he heard the news of his defeat; he hastened back to Riyadh, and anticipated the vengeance of Muhammad by flight to the Hasa with all his family and such property as was movable. Here he was met by a Turkish offer of the governorship of Riyadh under the ægis of the Ottoman Empire, with a Turkish garrison to protect him —and incidentally to ensure the punctual payment of the tribute stipulated (a trifling amount merely intended to establish the nominal suzerainty of Turkey over Central Arabia). ‘Abdul Rahman was, however, too dismayed by his experiences to entertain the offer, and he subsequently came under suspicion of conniving at a movement on the part of Qasim ibn Thani, the Shaikh of Qatar, for the overthrow of Turkish rule in the Hasa. He then sought a refuge at Kuwait, but being refused admission by the Shaikh, Muhammad al Sabah, wandered for a time with the ʿAjman until he found a short respite at Qatar, where finally, after negotiations with the Turks, he received permission to reside at Kuwait. And there he lived with his family until in due course he returned to Riyadh as the first subject of his eldest son.

Meanwhile Muhammad ibn Rashid ruled all inner Arabia, and though his writ was not altogether unchallenged in the more distant southern provinces—the towns of Hauta and Hariq boast that no Rashidite Governor or tax-gatherer ever set foot inside them and Shaqra was never subservient, with the result that for the time Tharmida was made the headquarters of the official government—Muhammad was the only power properly describable as such in all desert Arabia. Jabal Shammar had already greatly prospered under his rule, and continued to be the most prosperous part of the country, while the Qasim, no longer led by the astute and courtly Zamil, and other provinces made considerable progress in repairing the ravages of war. Muhammad's only serious cross was his dependence on potential enemies for his supplies, and, particularly, for his munitions, in the absence of a sea-port under his effective control. He was therefore constantly under the necessity of making good this defect in his armoury by recourse to all the wiles of diplomacy, and the proof of his success is that he managed to get what he needed, though the presence of the survivors of the Saʿud family at Kuwait tended to cut off the easiest source of all.

Here developments were afoot which were destined to play a large part in the subsequent history of Arabia. Muhammad ibn Sabah and his brother, Jarrah, had fallen victims to assassination at the hands of a third brother, Mubarak, who seized the vacant throne and soon proceeded to show that he was a power in the land. By methods similar to those of Muhammad, he drew the Badawin to his standard and consolidated a position which would enable him to take advantage of developments in the interior; at the same time the presence of ‘Abdul Rahman and his sons as his guests gave him a voice in the affairs of Najd, whose tribal Shaikhs and leading townsfolk came to Kuwait with their complaints and their aspirations; and, finally, he was a student of world politics, and, being intent on preserving his independence if not on extending his power, he saw with clear vision that the rivalries of Great Britain on the one hand and of certain other Powers using Turkey as a catspaw on the other could be turned to his own benefit. Britain's negative policy of preventing possible enemies from occupying strategic positions on the shores of the Gulf fitted in with Mubarak's own positive policy of keeping Kuwait to himself. He therefore clung to Great Britain, and that meant a covertly hostile attitude towards the Turks, his near neighbours in ‘Iraq. And this conclusion of his political philosophy he imparted to a pupil who would thereafter adopt it with equal tenacity and with incomparably greater results. ‘Abdul ‘Aziz the Second owed much to his enforced sojourn in the electric atmosphere of Kuwait during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile another power was rising on the borders of ‘Iraq, where the Muntafiq had again thrown up a leader of character. Sa‘dun Pasha was as ambitious as he was astute. He kept the Turks guessing in the Wilayat of Basra, where he was more powerful than the Wali and where he neither paid taxes nor obeyed orders unless it suited him to do so. But his ambitions for the immediate future lay rather in the desert, and the time was drawing near for his activities in that direction, though it was not yet, nor indeed while Muhammad lived.

We have already seen that Muhammad had good reason to covet the conveniences of Kuwait for purposes of supply, but he was well aware of the dangers of provoking intervention there by Powers who might well rob him of the fruits of his efforts while removing an enemy of no great importance from the scene. A further ground for suspicion of Kuwait was provided by its harbouring of the Sa'ud refugees; and he doubtless had reason to fear a combination of Mubarak and Sa'dun against himself. But he had much, and he was wise in his generation; war on the frontier would mean disturbances in Najd itself, where his rule was accepted with resignation, though without enthusiasm. He would not jeopardise actual gains by gambling for doubtful profits; but he was not left untempted. A wealthy pearl merchant of Bahrain connected by marriage with the murdered Muhammad al Sabah was sworn to be revenged on the murderer, and Qasim ibn Thani of Qatar seems to have had some private reason for hatred of Mubarak; both appealed to Muhammad for assistance, and warned him of the danger inherent in the brood of young Sa'uds growing up under the usurper's protection. But they found Muhammad in no state to think of campaigns; he was, in fact, on his death-bed, though his faculties were with him, and 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Mit'ab, his nephew, who was destined to succeed him, received the last counsels of the dying Prince, who urgently advised avoidance of all hostilities against Kuwait. And so in 1897 Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Rashid died after a reign of twenty-eight years, in the course of which he had shed lustre on the name of his house and proved himself the greatest Arab of his time both in war and in council—the greatest, indeed, since the two great Wahhabis, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz and Sa‘ud, had gone to their rest. It is said that he was poisoned by Majid, the son of his faithful henchman, Hamud ibn ‘Ubaid, but there seems but little, if any, evidence for the tale; and we may suppose that, like his father, he died in the ordinary course of nature; no other of the rulers of his house enjoyed that fortune. By prudent administration he had wiped away the stain of blood that had marked his accession; *omnium consensu capax imperii* though he long wore the imperial crown, he left an empire which a short generation would see shattered into fragments. The star of the House of Rashid was at its zenith, and there were then no clouds in the Arabian sky.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SECOND WAHHABI EMPIRE: ‘ABDUL ‘AZIZ II IBN SA‘UD

ACT I. RESTORATION

THE history of modern Arabia is the drama of a cause slowly but surely proceeding to its climax of final success through various vicissitudes of fortune, which now propelled it comet-like to the zenith, and now flung it headlong into depths from which recovery seemed wellnigh impossible. And in the last decade of the nineteenth century one of the acutest and best-informed observers of Arabian events, the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, was emboldened to state that "the old Wahhabi power is now broken for ever, and Najd is getting into touch with the world through commerce." It is true that at this time Muhammad ibn Rashid was still the arbiter of Arabia's fate, but the remark here quoted remained unmodified in a later edition of the work published in 1912, and still seemed to contain a grain of essential truth in spite of the political changes which had occurred in the interval. And it was not indeed till some years later that the world began to realise that something quite unexpected and extraordinary was happening in Arabia. Still less did it or could it realise that it was the old Wahhabi power which would bring Arabia into close commercial and political intercourse with its neighbours. As a matter of fact Europe had somewhat ceased to be in touch with developments in inner Arabia since the spacious days of the explorations of Burton, Doughty, the Blunts and Huber in the 'seventies and 'eighties of last century; and it would be some years yet before the old familiarity with Arabian affairs was re-established by such pre-war explorers as Alois Musil, G. E. Leachman, Gertrude Bell, Captain W. H. I. Shakespear, Barclay Raunkiaer and some others. Yet none of these would see the writing on the wall.

Nevertheless at the dawn of the twentieth century the stage was already set for great developments in Arabia, though the dark horse was still in his stable. 'Abdul 'Aziz, the eldest of the five sons of 'Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal ibn Sa'ud, was now in his twentieth year in the first year of the twentieth century; and he was, as we have seen, living with his father and brothers in exile at Kuwait, under the shadow and influence of Mubarak ibn Sabah, who, though he had come to his throne by foul means at the expense of his two brothers, would justify the means by his subsequent record, and proved both an able tutor and a valuable friend to his young guest. Mubarak himself, like a grain between the upper and the nether millstones of Turkey and Great Britain, was a model of diplomatic astuteness in his never-ceasing efforts to temper the too-fine grinding that threatened his little principality with increasing insistence as the years and the ambitions of Russia and Germany emphasised the positive and negative aspects of its strategic beauty. The Hasa coast was held by the Turks, but their pretensions to Bahrain had met with no success when confronted by the firm attitude of the British both in 1871 and 1895, when formal and informal attempts were made to assert Turkish suzerainty, and were on both occasions opposed by the necessary show of force. The rest of the Arabian shore of the Persian Gulf was at this time as effectively under British influence as Bahrain; and by the end of the century the political position in the Gulf was already in effect correctly describable in the words of Lord Lansdowne spoken to the House of Lords in 1903: "We should regard the establishment of a naval base or of a fortified port on the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and that we should certainly resist with all the means at our disposal." The old order had changed indeed, and the British Government was no longer in any doubt as to the part it intended to play in what was to all intents and purposes already regarded as a British lake; and later in the same year we find Lord Curzon communicating to the chiefs of the Trucial Coast his fervent conviction of the beneficent results to them of British activities in the Gulf. Out of the welter of centuries British policy had taken definite shape under the ægis of a great viceroy, and it will not be out of place at this stage in the story to sketch briefly the steps by which such a result was arrived at.

The occupation of the Hasa by the Turks in 1871 and the desirability of Bahrain, which effectively commanded the entrance to that territory, produced a corresponding wakefulness on the part of the British authorities in the Gulf. The Political Resident, Colonel Lewis Pelly, lost no time in paying a visit to Shaikh 'Isa ibn Khalifa of Bahrain and in renewing to him an assurance of British protection against the imperialistic designs of Midhat Pasha, on the sole condition that he should reaffirm his acceptance of the terms of the agreement made in 1861. Nothing in that agreement proved an obstacle to the new pact: the British should be at liberty to reside and trade in Shaikh 'Isa's territories under the separate jurisdiction of the British Resident;

Bahrain would abstain from the practice of slavery and other reprehensible maritime activities; its adherence to previous accords with the Trucial chiefs would stand; and, in the event of the islands being threatened with aggression by other Powers, Great Britain should be called in in the capacity of protective arbitrator. Shaikh 'Isa gave the necessary assurances of good-will, and British ships stood by to warn off the Turks. In 1880 British relations with Bahrain advanced another step, apparently in consequence of another Turkish *démarche* incompatible with its political integrity and British interests; by means of an accord known as the "First Exclusive Agreement" Shaikh 'Isa undertook to allow no other Power to establish a consulate or a coaling depot in his islands; and he further undertook to refrain from negotiating or making treaties with any other Power without the permission of Great Britain. Eight years later the British authorities intervened to secure certain reforms in the administration of the Bahrain Customs in consequence of the farming out of the collection of dues to local contractors. And in 1892 a "Final Exclusive Agreement" was negotiated whereby the Shaikh of Bahrain engaged not to "cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation" any territory under his jurisdiction to any Power other than the British Government. British control of this important position was thus for all practical purposes complete, and the Turks only once again ventured to challenge it. That was in 1895, when, under Turkish instigation, the Al ibn 'Ali tribe, which had formerly migrated from Bahrain to Zubara, on the Qatar peninsula, secured the alliance of the Qatar tribes for a projected invasion of the islands. British warships at once stood by, and a warning was followed by a slight bombardment, which put an end to the affair and brought the refractory tribesmen to heel. Early in the new century a British political agent was appointed to reside at Bahrain, and soon afterwards a branch of the Arabian Mission of the American Reformed Dutch Church was planted in the islands from the parent colony at Basra. In 1904 serious misdemeanours on the part of certain members of the ruling family, resulting in attacks on Persian and other foreign residents of Bahrain, gave rise to vigorous intervention by the British authorities in the form of an ultimatum demanding various internal administrative reforms which were immediately conceded.

Meanwhile the British Government was busily engaged in developing a similar policy of exclusive influence in the region of Masqat and its hinterland, with the substantial difference that, while in Bahrain it had only the comparatively negligible competition of Turkey to face, it was confronted at Masqat by the growing effrontery of European rivalry. The assassination of Thuwaini in 1865 was followed by half a decade of turmoil, with an usurper, ‘Azzan ibn Qais, in the limelight. In 1871, however, a son of Saiyid Sa‘id, Turki by name, succeeded in wresting the chief power from his hands, and was duly recognised by Great Britain as the lawful ruler of Oman. His early years of rule were constantly troubled by disturbances between the rival religious factions of the Hinawi and Ghafiri, and by attacks on Masqat itself by the rebellious tribes of the interior, which gave rise to British armed intervention to preserve the *status quo*. Meanwhile the British Government was devoting its active attention to the suppression of the still vigorous remnants of the slave trade: an organised drive of British war-vessels scoured the southern coast of Arabia in 1870 and destroyed thirteen dhows engaged in the business, releasing no fewer than 967 slaves; a Select Committee of the House of Commons ascertained that the destination of many slaves brought into the Gulf was Basra, which presumably passed on its wares to the harems of Turkey; and in 1873 slave treaties were negotiated separately by Sir Bartle Frere with the principalities of Zanzibar and Masqat, to which the Trucial States declared their adherence, and in consequence of which a British man-of-war was stationed for a long period at Zanzibar, with the result of the almost complete suppression of the trade for the time being. In the same year British consular jurisdiction was recognised by Turki in respect of all Indians in his territory, while the British Government secured a further control of the country by accepting liability for the payment of the Zanzibar tribute to the Masqat treasury. In 1880 the special position of Great Britain was emphasised by the allotment of a military guard to the political agent; and the anti-slavery cause was further advanced about the same time by the negotiation of conventions with both Turkey and Persia. Simultaneously, however, there was some recrudescence of slave-running owing to a variety of causes, of which perhaps the most important was the loss of prestige due to British reverses in the Sudan. In 1886 the British had to intervene to help Turki against a rebel movement which reached the length of laying siege to Masqat itself, but Turki's obliging attitude in the matter of the slave trade was now duly rewarded by a gift of two batteries for the defence of his forts, by a high Indian decoration and by a British undertaking to defend him unconditionally against all unprovoked aggression. Two years later Turki was gathered to his fathers and succeeded by his son, Faisal, who received

British recognition on the condition of his agreeing not to alienate his territory in any way to any other Power than Great Britain—a condition rendered necessary by the incipient interest of Russia in the affairs of the Gulf and the arrival in the same year of a Russian mission in southern Persia to search for a suitable coaling station, and by tentative French intrigues in the same spirit. And, strange as it may seem, the German Government was at this time formally approached by the British Ambassador with a proposal that it should interest itself in the affairs of the Gulf by way of counterpoising the activity of Russia. In fact the era of international rivalry in these waters was now in full swing, and it is unnecessary to trace in detail the story of the petty annoyances to which the ever-watchful British authorities were subjected in the course of their determined attempts to reserve an exclusive influence in Gulf affairs. Faisal does not appear to have been altogether as amenable to British persuasion as his predecessor, and on occasion that persuasion had to be offered in somewhat vigorous form, as, for instance, when a French Vice-consul arrived on a gunboat in 1898 to complete a previous secret understanding regarding the grant of a concession for a coaling station. Faisal unwisely confronted the British authorities with the *fait accompli* of the concession, which was flagrantly in conflict with the treaty of "friendship, commerce and navigation" concluded in 1891 and specifically stipulating that no Masqat territory should be alienated by sale, mortgage or otherwise to any Power but Great Britain. At the same time the question of the declaration of a British protectorate had been mooted and abandoned as a clear infringement of the Anglo-French Agreement of 1862 regarding the independence of Masqat. Nominally, indeed, the political status of the two Powers *vis-à-vis* the territories of Faisal was precisely the same, and the French Government had, with a considerable show of reason, protested against the manner in which the British authorities were carving out a privileged position for themselves to its own detriment. The issue of flags by various French consular officers to Arabian and Zanzibari dhows mainly engaged in the slave trade was now made part and parcel of the counter-offensive against British activities, and in 1891 Russia joined France in an accord aiming at the reduction of British influence in the Gulf. The grant of the flag was subsequently restricted, in deference to the terms of a "General Act" of the Brussels Conference for the Suppression of the Slave Trade, which came into force in 1892, but flags continued to be issued to subjects of Oman who applied for them at Zanzibar, and slave-dealers flocked to the consular agent at Masqat for registration as French subjects from 1894 onwards. In truth the ostensible suppression and the clandestine encouragement of the slave-trade were but means for the enhancement of the political influence of the rival Powers; and it is absurd to suppose that in the early 'nineties either Downing Street or the Quai d'Orsay cared a fig for the real interests of the slaves, though for the purposes of public discussion Great Britain was certainly on the side of the angels. The arms traffic was another matter on which the two Powers took different lines, with the very natural result that for some time there was a boom in rifles and ammunition, centring round Masqat. Here again Great Britain was able to adopt a high moral tone, because that was the least convenient obstacle for the French to circumvent, but we have only to go back a decade to find an active arms traffic at

Bushire, involving the export of British rifles in British ships by British firms in England to British firms on Persian soil.

Be that as it may, the French were skating on thin ice, and their successful wheedling of a coaling depot out of the too-hasty Faisal proved to be an illusory advantage. The British, of course standing by with warships to point the logic of their argument, demanded the immediate cancellation of the concession, and added gall to the pill by coupling with it a demand for the payment of compensation for the wrongs and injuries suffered by various British Indian subjects in the course of disturbances which had taken place in 1895. Faisal declared that it was now too late to withdraw the concession, to which he stood committed. The guns were trained on his fortresses and he was bidden to do as he was told. He did within the week, and cordial relations were restored between the naughty boy and his tutor, who undertook to settle all accounts with the villain who had misled him into a temporary display of a very unreal independence. France and Russia kicked impotently against the pricks of a very solid British position on the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf, embracing everything between Masqat and Bahrain; and the relative strength of the various Powers interested was not lost on one who needed a powerful friend further up the Gulf. From 1865 onwards Kuwait had been tacitly regarded as lying within the sphere of exclusive Turkish influence, and the forward policy of the British Government had excluded this port from its purview until the end of the century, when Europe suddenly awoke to a sense of its potential strategic importance. In 1896 Mubarak ibn Sabah secured the throne of the principality by the murder of his brothers, and interested parties made strenuous efforts both with the Porte and with Muhammad ibn Rashid to secure the chastisement of the usurper. Muhammad, almost with his dying breath, warned his nephew and successor to refrain from any interference in a matter which concerned him not at all; and though ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was ultimately lured with gifts into disregarding this good advice, it was for the moment from the Turks that Mubarak had most to fear. He had murdered faithful vassals of the Porte, and the high officials at Basra were not unready to see justice done for a consideration. Mubarak turned to Great Britain, who declined to assume the responsibility of his protection; but in 1898 the matter was reconsidered in the light of British interests, when it became known that a Russian syndicate was endeavouring to secure a concession for the construction of a railway from the Mediterranean to the head of the Persian Gulf. Fortune favoured Mubarak, and in the following year he signed with Great Britain an agreement on the lines of those already in force at Bahrain and Masqat, by which his territories became inalienable except to Great Britain. The Turks now sought to intervene, but it was too late, and Mubarak, sure of his independence, remained staunch to his new ally.

Meanwhile he had enlisted the assistance of Sa‘dun Pasha of the Muntafiq for the mutual protection of their desert flanks from the tentative offensive of Ibn Rashid. The first rounds of the duel were but resultless skirmishes: Sa‘dun suffered a slight reverse at the hands of Ibn Rashid on the ‘Iraq frontier; ‘Abdul Rahman ibn Sa‘ud carried out a minor raid in the eastern desert; and finally an encounter between Ibn Rashid and the allies at ‘Ain al Saiyid resulted in the former withdrawing to Najd. In the late autumn of the same year, 1900, Mubarak and his allies took the field for a grand offensive with an army of 10,000 men, including the Mutair, ‘Ajman and Murra tribes; and the advanced base of the expedition was fixed at Shauki, to the west of the Dahna. From here the main body went north to seek out Ibn Rashid himself, while ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, the son of ‘Abdul Rahman ibn Sa‘ud, was at his own request sent with a small force to create a diversion against Riyadh. In February 1901 Mubarak's force met Ibn Rashid on the sand slopes between Sarif and Tarafiya, and was defeated with heavy loss. The survivors fled back to Kuwait with all speed; ‘Abdul ‘Aziz abandoned the siege of Riyadh; and Ibn Rashid, flushed with victory, marched through Sudair and Washm, dealing out condign punishment to all who had welcomed or favoured the invaders. Najd was cowed, but horrified at the brutality of its ruler; and the Wahhabi cause gained many active adherents who had been content enough under the sagacious rule of Muhammad. Nevertheless Ibn Rashid took up the offensive, and launched an attack against Jahra near Kuwait. Mubarak, however, received a certain amount of moral, if not material, support from the British, and the opportune presence of a warship hastened the departure of the Shammar forces. Ibn Rashid spared no effort to secure Turkish assistance for his campaign, but the Turks were nervous of taking any action at the head of the Gulf which might provoke active intervention by Great Britain at a moment when they were in active negotiation with Germany for the construction of a railway linking Constantinople with the Persian Gulf. Ibn Rashid was encouraged to do what he could to make Mubarak uncomfortable, but he was left to do it in his own way; and the initiative passed to Kuwait, where the young

'Abdul 'Aziz was itching to retrieve his failure of the spring.

Mubarak himself was not anxious to push matters too far for fear of forcing the Turks to intervene; but he raised no objection to an apparently harmless sortie into the desert by 'Abdul 'Aziz with a small force of his relatives and slaves, numbering not more than forty in all. He provided them with camels and arms and food; and off they went, not quite knowing themselves whither they fared or where they would end. Ibn Rashid took scant notice of so slight a challenge, and remained at his war-camp at the wells of Hafar in the Batin valley, carrying out raids against the tribes owing allegiance to Sa'dun and Mubarak. Meanwhile 'Abdul 'Aziz scoured the eastern desert and collected considerable reinforcements for his forays among the tribes in his path, but for the time being he did not venture far out from the confines of the Hasa. At the instigation of Ibn Rashid, the Turkish authorities in that province chased him from pillar to post, and little by little the Badawin who had gathered round him in the hope of loot abandoned the profitless enterprise and returned to their homes. Even Mubarak and 'Abdul Rahman sent him messengers entreating him to return to Kuwait, but the young Prince and his forty faithful followers turned deaf ears alike to the threats of foes and the prayers of friends. 'Abdul 'Aziz was obsessed with an idea which, at whatever cost to himself and his companions, he would put to the test of execution before he went back. He was then at the wells of Haradh, between the Hasa and the Jabrin oasis. On December 17th he began a leisurely march through the unfrequented southern deserts, and early in the new year he was at the wells of Abu Jifan, on the Hasa-Riyadh road. On

January 15th he left half his force, now some sixty strong, among the uplands of Jubail close to the Wahhabi capital, with instructions to make all speed for Kuwait if they heard nothing from him within twenty-four hours. With the remainder he advanced to the fringe of the Riyadh oasis, where he posted his brother, Muhammad, with twenty men in hiding among the palm-groves to await the prearranged signal of success or failure. And with the remaining ten, including his cousin, ‘Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, he made his way over the tumbled ruins of a deserted part of the city to the door of a house facing the portals of the great fort, where the Rashidian Governor, ‘Ajlan, was wont to spend his nights for the greater safety of its massive walls. A woman opened to their knocking, and was sternly discouraged from completing the shriek that was on her lips; she and other women in the house were locked into a room with orders to hold their tongues on pain of instant death; and ‘Abdul ‘Aziz and his men spent the remaining hours of the night reading the Quran, drinking coffee and watching the fort gate from an upper window. At dawn it was thrown open and, accompanied by his slaves and attendants, ‘Ajlan strode out to go to his private residence. At that moment the watchers issued out on them from the house opposite, and a furious *mêlée* took place in the open square. ‘Ajlan himself was killed with many of his men, and ‘Abdullah ibn Jiluwi effected an entrance into the fort in spite of the efforts of its occupants to close the gate. In a few minutes all was over; the Rashidian garrison surrendered; and it was proclaimed from the turrets that the house of Sa‘ud ruled once more in its ancient capital, after an interval of eleven years spent in exile. Riyadh had nothing to regret in the change that had come so suddenly and so peacefully. The rule of Ibn Rashid, tolerated in the days of Muhammad as being preferable to the chaos wrought by the sons of Faisal, had become burdensome to the people of Najd.

'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Rashid adopted a philosophical attitude towards this blow to his power and prestige, the full bearing of which on his own future he was probably very far from realising. For a time he remained at Hafar, trying to induce the Turks to act against Kuwait, and towards the end of the spring season, convinced that there was now nothing to hope for from them, he returned to Hail to prepare for a campaign against Ibn Sa'ud during the coming winter. The latter meanwhile set busily to work in repairing the long-neglected fortifications of his capital, and wisely confined himself to re-establishing his authority in the southern provinces of Kharj, Aflaj and Wadi Dawasir, which had never fully bowed the knee to the Rashidian dynasty, though they formally formed part of its dominions. In these tasks he had the assistance of his brother, Sa'd, who came up from Kuwait to join him, and who from now onwards always took a prominent part in the advancement of his brother's cause. By the end of 1902 all seemed well in the south, and the new Wahhabi ruler was ready to face the offensive which Ibn Rashid launched against him in the autumn; he took, however, the precaution of inviting his father, 'Abdul Rahman, who had abdicated his duties and privileges in his son's favour after the disaster of Sarif, to come and reside at Riyadh as his regent while he was busy elsewhere. The old man's return was made the occasion of a triumphal procession in celebration of his son's victory; and for nearly thirty years more the two worked together in a common cause with a harmony which was both touching and beautiful. The son deferred ever to the father on occasions of ceremony, and the father ever sought to avoid such occasions in loyal acceptance of the son as his own and his country's sovereign. For the rest they were ever in consultation on questions of policy, and no man ever received more loyal service or more prudent advice than did ʻAbdul ʻAziz ibn Saʻud from his father until the latter's death in 1928.

Meanwhile Ibn Rashid was working down towards Riyadh with detachments thrown out at some distance on either side of him, with the general idea of an assault on the walls if fortune favoured his plans. He learned, however, that the defences had been thoroughly repaired and that Ibn Saʻud's representatives were actively engaged in the southern provinces in raising forces for a prolonged campaign. He therefore slipped past Riyadh to attack Dilam, the capital of Kharj, before the enemy could gather in sufficient strength to defend the position. Camping for the night at Naʻjan, he advanced confidently at dawn towards the thick palm-groves of Dilam, which he had almost reached when his leading troops were subjected to a withering fire at close quarters. Ibn Saʻud had rapidly collected a force and come up during the night to face the enemy. After the first surprise a fierce battle ensued until nearly sunset, when Ibn Rashid withdrew discomfited to his base, and, under cover of night, retired to Sulaimiya and made all speed thence up Wadi Sulaiʻ homeward. He little knew that Ibn Saʻud, for all his victory, was in no state to pursue, being indeed almost at the end of his ammunition.

Ibn Rashid soon took the field again, and pitched his war-camp at his favourite wells of Hafar, whence he raided the environs of Kuwait and threatened the town itself, the Turks being apparently content to let matters take the course prescribed by Fate. Mubarak appealed to his old pupil for assistance, and Ibn Sa'ud, having replenished his wasted stores, came down with a considerable force to join the former's son Jabir in an offensive against the Shammar forces. Ibn Rashid, finding his sojourn at Hafar unprofitable, struck camp and took the road to Hail; but within a few days he was within view of the walls of Riyadh! Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud, duly advised of his enemy's tactics, left his capital to look after itself and marched on the Qasim for a raid on the Mutair. This immediately drew Ibn Rashid away from Riyadh, after a failure to take the town by assault; but 'Abdul Rahman was too quick for him, and both Shaqra and Tharmida in the province of Washm had been occupied by a flying column before Ibn Rashid reached that neighbourhood. He had no difficulty in recovering Tharmida, whose people for some reason were always staunch to him and paid for their loyalty later on; but Musa'id ibn Suwailim, the Wahhabi general, held Shaqra against a short siege until Ibn Sa'ud, having brought up the rest of his family from Kuwait to Riyadh, came to his relief. Ibn Rashid retired to Sudair, and 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi carried Tharmida by assault, the last of the Rashidian troops fleeing by night after a stubborn stand within the strong walls of the fort. In a short time the whole of Sudair also was in the hands of Ibn Sa'ud except the capital, Majma'a; and Ibn Rashid, apparently unable to stem the tide of the Wahhabi renaissance, withdrew to the Qasim. The summer forced a cessation of military activity, and Ibn Sa'ud, leaving Ahmad al Sudairi as his Governor in Washm with the general supervision of affairs in Sudair, returned to Riyadh. The autumn of 1903 saw the resumption of hostilities with a raid by

Ibn Rashid on the ‘Ataiba and Qahtan tribes, which had passed with the capture of Washm under the suzerainty of the Wahhabi ruler. The latter immediately came up again to the Sudair province to watch the development of the situation and to prepare for the next step, which envisaged the recovery of the Qasim. Mubarak was invited to send what help he could together with those of the leading citizens of the Qasim, who had preferred exile at Kuwait to the acceptance of Rashidian rule after the battle of Mulaida; but a shortage of rain in the previous spring had created famine conditions throughout central Najd, and Ibn Sa‘ud, unable to maintain his army in the field, returned for the time being to Riyadh.

Profiting by this respite, Ibn Rashid posted strong detachments in the Qasim (to supervise the doubtful loyalty of ‘Anaiza) and in the Sirr province, while he himself went down to the ‘Iraq frontier to enlist further levies among the Shammar in that neighbourhood and to rouse the Turks to lend him active assistance against an ever-growing danger. Ibn Sa‘ud took advantage of his absence to come up early in March 1904 by forced marches to Sirr, where he inflicted a crushing defeat on Husain ibn Jarrad, the Rashidian general, who was himself killed. The important Harb tribe became thus divided in its allegiance, as its southern sections could not afford to remain in opposition to Ibn Sa‘ud, while the sections based on the Qasim were in a similar position *vis-à-vis* the Shammar prince. In April Ibn Sa‘ud took the field again for another attempt on the Qasim, but sent orders for a concentration at Thadiq for a campaign in the eastern desert against the Shammar on the ‘Iraq border. Launching out into the desert, he made a rapid detour through the Nafud, and suddenly appeared before ‘Anaiza itself. With him were the chief men of the Sulaim family, whose headman had been Zamil up to the fatal battle of Mulaida, while the Bassam and other leading families of the town were staunch adherents to the cause of Ibn Rashid, whose military representative was Majid ibn Subhan. The assault was begun by the ‘Anaiza contingent among the Wahhabi forces, and, as the battle progressed, ‘Abdullah ibn Jiluwi was sent to their support. The town surrendered to the Sulaim leaders to avoid an assault by the Wahhabi elements led by Ibn Jiluwi, and Majid ibn Subhan, finding himself in danger, beat a hasty retreat; he returned, however, bringing with him certain members of the Sa‘ud family, who had been living in exile at Hail since the events of 1891, to serve as hostages covering his attack. His trick, however, did not succeed, and the hostages, in the heat of the battle, escaped their host by hamstringing their own horses. They were received with open arms by their cousin, who, though now ruler of the Wahhabi country, belonged only to a cadet branch of the family of which they were the senior surviving members, being the sons of Sa‘ud ibn Faisal, who had sat on the Wahhabi throne for a brief period by usurpation from his elder brother, ‘Abdullah, who died childless. Sa‘ud had left three sons, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, Muhammad and Sa‘d, who respectively begat Sa‘ud, Sa‘ud and Faisal; and it was these three who now joined the eldest son of their grandfather's youngest brother to plague him with insurrection in due course. From the fact of their recognition on the battlefield their branch of the family acquired the *sobriquet* of "Al ‘Araif," to distinguish them from the members of the *de facto* ruling house. The leading member of the clan was Sa‘ud ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn Sa‘ud, who subsequently married Ibn Sa‘ud's sister, Nura.

Majid ibn Subhan having fled from the battlefield amid the sand-dunes of ‘Anaiza, Ibn Sa‘ud made his entry into the town and oasis; and some days later he marched on Buraida, which the Shammar forces made no attempt to defend, though the Rashidian Governor and his small garrison held out in the great fort for two months after the opening of the gates of the city to the conqueror by the citizens. He surrendered, however, at the beginning of June, and Ibn Sa‘ud was master of all that his grandfather had ruled effectively in Najd within thirty months of the dramatic stroke by which he had recovered the Wahhabi capital. In re-establishing Wahhabi rule throughout the provinces of middle and southern Najd, he had experienced amazingly little difficulty; and it is probable that his operations were greatly assisted by the fact that ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn Rashid had forfeited the sympathy of the Najd townsfolk by his policy in general and by his treatment of them after the victory of Sarif in particular. His courage and military prowess were notorious, but he seems to have been singularly lacking in the political acumen of his great predecessor, whose empire fell to pieces in his hands without any apparent reason for its sudden disintegration. He was never more than a great Badawin chief with a tireless propensity for raiding, and with never a motive but the loot of the moment. His reign was the beginning of the end of the Rashid dynasty, and his dependence on the Turks lost him and his house the sympathy of Arabia.

ACT II. CONSOLIDATION

Unlike his namesake of the Rashid dynasty, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was inspired with a definite purpose and motive for all he did, at any rate from the moment that he had staked his all and won so much on a single forlorn and desperate throw with Fate. He can scarcely have counted on so easy a capture of the Wahhabi capital, but he had fully discounted the consequences of failure in advance. Death was the only alternative to success. His motive, long and assiduously fostered by his father in the days of his tutelage, was revenge on the Rashid dynasty, which had already too long occupied the throne of his fathers. That motive was fully and faithfully satisfied by the recovery of Riyadh itself and all the Najd provinces which his grandfather had ruled. Henceforth his purpose was empire as his ancestors had understood it, and perhaps something more. He had probably dreamed of such an objective in the days of his adolescence under the hospitable inspiration of Mubarak ibn Sabah; and at Kuwait he had watched the steady and successful development of a definite political programme by the astute representatives of the British Government. Such a purpose had now come within the bounds of practical possibility for himself with the establishment of his moral and, indeed, material superiority over Ibn Rashid; but it could not be achieved except with the utmost caution, and in accordance with a definite plan of campaign. Caution was of the very essence of his character, though the few bold strokes by which he achieved some of his most brilliant results may seem to belie such a statement; nevertheless it may be supported by the fact that many years later an authority of unquestionable competence was able to aver that in all his career he had never made a mistake. That was high praise, but not undeserved. Whether at this time he had a plan of campaign it is impossible to say; it is at any rate improbable; but it is certain that he had devised one within a very few years, and that in devising it he had not disregarded the lessons provided by the history of his own country. The principles of his foreign policy were simple enough, and he had only two Powers to reckon with, England and Turkey; the latter could never be other than hostile, holding as it did the Hasa and coveting dominion over Najd; with Turkey therefore he would seek no understanding. Great Britain was the natural enemy of Turkey under the existing conditions of European politics, and therefore with Great Britain he would cultivate relations of friendship and cordiality. None but these two Powers counted in the scheme of his political future, and the Great War was to decide whether his choice between the two had been well or ill made.

Internally he was confronted by a problem far more complex and difficult. Arabia was essentially a country of nomad tribes with a highly developed sense of tribal solidarity accompanied by an intense individualism which promised ill for any attempt to weld the centrifugal elements of its population into a national, much less imperial, whole. History had already proved that such an objective was eminently feasible under certain conditions, but that, those conditions being essentially evanescent in the social climate of Arabia, it could not be maintained indefinitely. No permanent political structure could be raised on the shifting sands of nomad society, which faithfully reflected the physical conditions of the country in which it had developed through hundreds and even thousands of years. The problem thus posed by the unchangeable natural conditions of the country was therefore insoluble, and Ibn Sa'ud set himself the task of solving it.

From the history of the rise and fall of the old Wahhabi Empire he culled the lesson that the innate fanaticism of a desert people could be stirred under the influence of a great idea to galvanise its dissident elements into common action in a common cause, and that such a cause could be maintained so long as the great idea remained actively operative and the fanaticism was kept at white heat. Like a forest fire it would burn unconquerably as long as there was fuel to feed it; and in this case the fuel was constant aggression and expansion at the expense of those who did not share the great idea. There was obviously some natural limit to such a process, and when that limit was reached, as it had been at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the conquest of all Arabia, the fire would have to feed on itself and so gradually die out, even if there was no one to hasten the process with water and earth. The tribal elements of the Wahhabi army would tend to disintegrate and quarrel, becoming an easy prey to any invader and a certain cause of internal disruption. This is what actually happened with amazing suddenness at a moment when the Wahhabi power seemed to be at its zenith. The Turks appeared; there was no more left for the tribesmen to loot who had already looted everything; war without the prospect of loot was unattractive; on the other hand, the gifts that poured into the country with the forces of Muhammad 'Ali were more than welcome, and those would get them who claimed them first; and, finally, man had triumphantly vindicated God's cause, and it was surely now for God to defend it against the evil-doers. The tribal conscience was easily salved, and the tribes hastened to make the best terms, each for itself. The general cause went by the board. The great idea had justified itself as an instrument of empire, and it mattered little whether it was religious, national or merely imperialistic. The human material was ideal for any scheme of conquest, and the requisite leaders had appeared at the right moment to use that material. The final defeat was obviously due to the lack of a homogeneous feeling of national unity among the naturally centrifugal elements of the victorious force. That fault would have to be remedied before empire could be again seriously contemplated; and Arabian history provided the young and ardent Ibn Sa'ud with another and more recent object-lesson by which to check the conclusions suggested by the Wahhabi triumph and *débâcle*. Muhammad ibn Rashid, with a single homogeneous tribe and the necessary great idea, not religious this time, but purely imperialistic, had achieved a success less extensive than, but definitely comparable with, that of the old Wahhabis, and had ruled the greater part of Arabia with all the appearances of permanence. In this case it was a great personality and a great idea inspiring a community with a definite and natural national consciousness of imperial endeavour. The essential interests of that community, however, were parochial rather than imperial, and the removal of the personal or ideal inspiration would prove fatal to its empire. Under Muhammad's successor, a soldier but no statesman, the process of disintegration began, and proceeded headlong to its inevitable consummation. While he thought of nothing but war and loot, his subjects wearied of holding provinces far from their home pastures. The growing dissatisfaction of those provinces with the methods of their ruler made their lot increasingly unenviable, and at the first sign of forceful opposition they were glad enough to depart homewards. Ibn Rashid was left with no more than a force of raiders enamoured of his manner of life, but unable to make headway against organised opposition. Within a few years the Shammar tribesmen were back in their homeland and content to remain there, and thence occasionally to accompany their lord to raid and ravage their neighbours. It mattered nothing to them that Ibn Sa'ud should rule again in the land of his ancestors. Here again the weakness from the imperial point of view lay in the essential characteristics of a Badawin tribe. Its homogeneity was its strength, but unless it was held together and kept active by a person or an idea it would revert to its purely tribal interests, and empire would go to the wall as surely as it had done when the old Wahhabis found themselves with conquered provinces to hold instead of enemies to conquer.

It was abundantly clear that no permanent structure could ever be built on Badawin foundations; and there can be no doubt whatever that Ibn Sa'ud, in the course of his musings during the years that immediately followed his reinstatement at Riyadh, deliberately formulated this conclusion as to the conditions which governed his ambitions, and equally deliberately envisaged and adopted the only logical alternative to the abandonment of his dreams. And that was nothing less than to uproot and destroy the very foundations of Badawin society, which had endured without the slightest change since the days of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and to replace them with the concrete of a national spirit on which to build up an Arabian nation. In this way he can justly claim the credit of being the first of all Arab nationalists, but it was only by a few years that he anticipated the nationalist movement that began to stalk abroad, at first uneasily and furtively, through the Arab domains of the Ottoman Empire during the last years of the mediæval tyranny of 'Abdul Hamid, the last of the great Calif-Sultans of the house of Osman.

But Ibn Sa‘ud was not to be left at leisure to carry out the reforms he contemplated; and Ibn Rashid was neither powerless to annoy him nor without support in quarters which retained too vivid a memory of Wahhabi activities to wish them renewed. Turkey, far from weary of the struggle, was now receiving every encouragement from Germany to strike out on a policy of imperial consolidation, if not of expansion. At the beginning of the century Arabia had been innocent of railways, but in 1900 a German commission had visited Kuwait in the interests of the "economic" development of the backward provinces of the Turkish Empire, only to find itself stymied by the agreement of the preceding year between Shaikh Mubarak and Great Britain. Another scheme, however, commended itself in the following year, when Sultan ‘Abdul Hamid, again with German support and encouragement, issued a decree for the construction of a railway from Damascus to the Hijaz for the "facilitation of the pilgrimage to Mecca," and himself handsomely headed the list of voluntary subscriptions which was immediately opened to finance the project. Work was not actually begun on the Hijaz Railway until 1904, the year of Ibn Sa‘ud's recovery of the Qasim, but meanwhile Great Britain, unable to interfere in northern and western Arabia, had not been idle in the Persian Gulf to stem the tide of rival penetration. The controversy with the French over the question of a coaling station at Masqat was satisfactorily settled in 1900 by the offer of a share of the British dumps; but a convenient outbreak of plague had enabled the British to emphasise their position of practical control by the assumption of the sanitary supervision of various coastal ports and by the extension of the Indo-European cable from Jask to Masqat in 1901. Two years later the son of the

Sultan of Masqat attended Lord Curzon's Delhi Darbar, and in the same year a petty incident concerning three native quarantine-breakers, in whom the French can have had not the slightest interest except for purposes of controversy with Great Britain, resulted in a threatening parade of British and French war vessels in Masqat harbour. *Parturiunt montes.* The case was transferred to London for negotiation with the French Ambassador, and a reference to The Hague resulted in the release of the natives by the Masqat authorities and the departure of the warships. Lord Curzon then paid a state visit to the Gulf to make it quite clear that Great Britain had no intention of renouncing her labour of love for the welfare of its denizens, whom she had not yet altogether cured of their incurable propensity for slaving, gun-running and any other occupation which promised a prospect of wealth. A British Assistant Political Agent had already been posted to Bahrain to help the local authorities to work the reforms which they had introduced without the slightest enthusiasm; and now Lord Curzon's visit provided an occasion for a further demonstration of British solicitude by the appointment of a Political Agent at Kuwait in spite of a vigorous protest by the Turks, the steamers of the British Indian Steam Navigation Company having already resumed their weekly sailings to this port, which had been suspended in deference to Turkish susceptibilities.

The position was thus instinct with possibilities of strife in the Persian Gulf, but Britain's position, particularly in view of the unmistakable threat contained in Lord Lansdowne's pronouncement already quoted, was too strong to be rashly challenged. Turkey left it alone, and turned her attention to more profitable fields, but she reckoned without her host.

Ibn Sa‘ud, by reason of his relations with Mubarak, was marked down as a friend of Britain, and therefore no friend of the Ottoman State; while Ibn Rashid, traditionally friendly and at least nominally subject, was in trouble with the Wahhabi leader, and therefore a deserving object of succour. His visit to the ‘Iraq frontier after his defeat in the Qasim was accordingly not unfruitful, and in spite of the summer heat the occasion was considered sufficiently urgent to warrant the immediate despatch of troops to restore his broken position in Arabia. While Ibn Rashid collected the Shammar contingents from their summer camps along the Euphrates, a Turkish force of some eight battalions, with near a score of guns, was rapidly mobilised under Ahmad Faizi Pasha; and the whole force launched out into the desert towards the end of May 1904. Meanwhile, as we have seen, Buraida had surrendered, and the Shammar garrison, which had been allowed to march forth in peace, reached Qusaiba on its way to Hail almost simultaneously with the Turkish force and Ibn Rashid. Immediate action was necessary before Ibn Sa‘ud should have time to organise his victory; and the combined force turned south. Apprised of this move, Ibn Sa‘ud had no mind to stand a siege at Buraida at the mercy of the enemy's superior artillery, and immediately marched out to take up a position near the little oasis of Busar, amid the dunes of the Khubub district. The Turko-Shammar force had meanwhile arrived at the plain of Qara‘a near the scene of Muhammad ibn Rashid's victory at Mulaida in 1891, and now moved further southward parallel with the sand-dunes to the neighbourhood of Bukairiya. Here on June 15th battle was joined in real earnest, and a mighty slaughter took place, the losses on either side being about 1000 killed. The struggle lasted all day, with varying results, but the Turks clung to their position with great tenacity, and in the end it was Ibn Sa'ud, who was wounded in the hand, that fled from the field, in ignorance of the success which had attended a charge of the Qasim contingents against the Shammar camp. Returning to headquarters, these found the Turks in occupation of the Wahhabi tents, and promptly attacked and routed them, capturing the guns which they had brought forward; but the absence of Ibn Sa'ud produced a feeling of unease, and the Qasim troops marched off to 'Anaiza and Buraida, leaving the field to the enemy, who could claim a victory which they had only half gained. The result was very satisfactory to Ibn Rashid and his Turkish allies, who, instead of following up their success by an advance on the chief towns, which would possibly have fallen an easy prey to an immediate attack, turned away to occupy the oases about Rass further up the valley of Wadi Rima southwards. Ibn Sa'ud was thus allowed a breathing-space to collect reinforcements for a resumption of the struggle, and tribal contingents from the 'Ataiba and Mutair soon came up to join him at 'Anaiza. He now advanced on Bukairiya, where the Turks had left their camp and the bulk of their supplies, and captured both the camp and the village after a sharp brush with a detachment of enemy cavalry. Meanwhile the Turks were bombarding the small town of Khabra, which held out until cholera—hitherto unknown in Arabia—made its appearance among the inhabitants from the enemy camp. The Turks now made for the larger town of Rass, for the siege of which they took up a position near Shinana; and, Ibn Sa'ud coming up to cover the town, the armies remained facing each other for the next three months, neither the Turkish bombardment nor the constant skirmishing of patrols producing any result, while the heat of the late summer and the presence of cholera reduced the Wahhabi force to almost open mutiny. In these circumstances Ibn Sa‘ud made overtures for peace, which were derisively rejected by Ibn Rashid, though even his tribal contingent began to murmur at their long detention on what was a great deal more than the customary raid. And it was the Shammar who made the first move for a return to their pastures with the permission of their chief; but Ibn Sa‘ud took advantage of their moving to attack the caravans laden with stores, and this was the signal for a general resumption of hostilities after the comparative quiet of the summer months. The Turks ranged up their guns for the bombardment of the fortified grange of Qasr ‘Uqaiyil, some distance due west of Rass, but Ibn Sa‘ud immediately came up to dispute the field, and the enemy forthwith limbered up and moved off to the northward. Letting them get well under weigh, Ibn Sa‘ud launched his cavalry at the retreating and heavily-encumbered enemy, who were forced to make a stand in the bed of Wadi Rima. In the first exchanges Ibn Rashid's men seemed to be gaining the upper hand, when Ibn Sa‘ud, seeing his right wing begin to waver, launched himself with the flower of his troops at the very centre of the enemy's position, which was held by the Turks and their artillery. The bold manœuvre succeeded admirably, and the Turks began to retreat, whereupon the whole of Ibn Rashid's force broke and fled, leaving all their guns and impedimenta to the victors, who were rewarded by a rich booty, including a large sum of gold intended for the pay of the Turkish troops. In fact, it was the richness of the booty that deterred the Wahhabis from all thought of pursuit, which might well have turned the defeat into a rout.

Nevertheless much had been gained, and the struggle which had begun so unpropitiously at Bukairiya in June had now in September ended in a victory which was more effective than spectacular. The Turks, worn out by a campaign under conditions of unaccustomed hardship and defeated, no longer retained the semblance of a military force; some of them surrendered to Ibn Sa'ud, others accompanied Ibn Rashid to the Shammar country, while many perished in the desert of hunger and thirst. In these circumstances the Ottoman authorities, who were simultaneously engaged in a more serious venture in the distant province of Yaman, determined to make the best of a bad job, and to secure, if possible, by negotiation what they had failed to extract by force. Ahmad Faizi Pasha was instructed to treat with Ibn Sa'ud on the basis that the Qasim should be left as a buffer-state between the Wahhabis and the Shammar, with Turkish garrisons at Buraida and 'Anaiza and a Governor-General nominated by the Turks. The Turkish demands took for granted that their military failure had impressed the Arabs with a due sense of their military strength. This was very far from being the case. Ibn Rashid had only welcomed their intervention as a prelude to active and sustained hostilities against Ibn Sa'ud; and when he found that no such plan figured in the scheme of his allies, he went off to sulk in his tents in the neighbourhood of Hail. Ibn Sa'ud, on the other hand, professed to welcome the proposed negotiations, and nominated his father to conduct them with Faizi Pasha on his behalf. His position was by no means too secure in the Qasim, where, though the majority of the population, and particularly 'Anaiza, were with him, Ibn Rashid had also a following, and some important elements at

Buraida were definitely in favour of Turkish rule. Meanwhile his old friend and tutor, Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait, had begun to view his rapid success with no little alarm and to curry favour with the Turks by intriguing with Ibn Rashid. In these circumstances the negotiations dragged on without any prospect of a definite result until events in the Yaman put an end to them. Ahmad Faizi Pasha was withdrawn to take command of the army which was being sent to relieve the situation in the far south; and under his deputy, Sidqi Pasha, the pretence of *pourparlers* came to an end, while the Turkish forces withdrew from the Arabian deserts, leaving the rival Arab dynasties to renew the struggle for hegemony.

The immediate cause of the resumption of hostilities arose out of the rivalries of the two leading families of Buraida, the houses of Muhanna and ‘Alaiyan, whose origin must be sought in the murder of the then Governor of Buraida, Muhanna abal Khail, in the reign of ’Abdullah ibn Faisal. Since then the house of ‘Alaiyan had been in the ascendant, and Ibn Sa‘ud’s unwillingness to disturb the existing régime for the time being had driven Salih ibn Muhanna, the head of the opposition party, into the arms of the Turks. The resulting intrigues so disgusted the Wahhabi prince that he hit upon the ingenious device of letting Ibn Rashid have another innings; and the inhabitants of the Qasim were not a little astonished to see him one day withdraw from the scene with the professed intention of giving them time to make up their minds as to the form of government they really wanted. Meanwhile he had received an urgent call for help from Qasim ibn Thani, the ruler of the little principality of Qatar, whose brother, Ahmad, had risen against him and had met with a considerable measure of success. Ibn Sa‘ud was glad enough of such a diversion to keep his attention off affairs in the Qasim, which he had every intention of retaining within his realm, while particularly anxious to do so with the assent of its people. Ibn Rashid, as he had anticipated, took advantage of his departure to occupy Rass, and the crushing defeat of a force sent to recover it was followed by a period of heavy-handed administration. This had the desired effect on the people of the Qasim, and a deputation representing both ʻAnaiza and Buraida (towns so seldom found in double harness though so near neighbours) was soon on its way to Riyadh to implore the Wahhabi's return. They had also sought the good offices of Shaikh Mubarak to support their plea, and the latter had accordingly written to his old pupil begging him to accede to their request, while at the same time he had written to Ibn Rashid encouraging him to resist. Ibn Saʻud, having accomplished the task for which he had gone to Qatar and driven Ahmad ibn Thani to seek safety in flight to Bahrain, found Mubarak's letters and the Qasim deputation at Riyadh on his return. He was not, however, ready for a full-dress campaign, and contented himself for the moment with sending his brother, Muhammad, to raid the Harb tribe on the edges of the Shammar territory, while Ibn Rashid replied with raids on the Mutair. After this had gone on for some time, Ibn Saʻud, having collected a force of Badawin and townsmen, came up into the Qasim and made contact with the Buraida force. The combined army now took up a position near the sand-dunes of Asyah, but a suspicion that Salih ibn Muhanna was secretly engaged in an intrigue with Ibn Rashid and contemplated treachery induced Ibn Saʻud to withdraw to Zilfi. The Buraida contingent was now allowed to depart, and Ibn Saʻud received definite news of the actual existence of a pact, made towards the end of 1905, between Mubarak and Ibn Rashid; he also intercepted letters from the Shaikh of Kuwait to Salih ibn Muhanna advising him to throw in his lot with the Shammar leader. To balance these unexpected setbacks, he enlisted the whole-hearted sympathy and active assistance of the Mutair under their chief, Faisal al Duwish, who now makes his first appearance in history, and would for a quarter of a century be one of the right-hand men of his liege lord, though he would actually end his career in arms against him.

The early months of 1906 were spent in alarums and excursions made difficult by unusually heavy rains; but the initiative was with Ibn Sa‘ud, while his rival moved his camp from place to place with great frequency to avoid an actual clash, although he had considerably superior numbers at his disposal. At length, in the middle of April, Ibn Sa‘ud received information that Ibn Rashid himself was lying at the depression of Raudhat al Muhanna within two hours' march of his own position, and that he was making to join the Buraida forces at Shiqqa, westward of the town. There was no time to lose if the enemy was to be caught before he joined his allies. To avoid attention, the intervening distance was covered on foot, but the alarm was given, and Ibn Rashid was able to mount and gallop round to collect his troops from their scattered camps. Meanwhile the Wahhabis launched their attack and got right into the main camp, where a desperate encounter took place when Ibn Rashid returned with his rallied troops. The Shammar gave ground, and their chief himself lost his life in his bold and desperate efforts to hold them together. He fell riddled with bullets, and his fall was the signal for a *sauve-qui-peut*, degenerating into a race for Hail between the rival claimants of the empty throne, which was to accommodate no fewer than five occupants in the space of two years, while the royal house wallowed in blood and anarchy, dragging the ordered state of the great Muhammad down with it into the abyss.

Ibn Sa'ud, now relieved of all anxiety on the score of attack by his old rival, seriously contemplated an advance into the enemy's country; but his small force was insufficient for the purpose, and he hoped that his change of fortune would win him volunteers in the Qasim. Salih ibn Muhanna was, however, a stumbling-block, and, as an assault on Buraida was also out of the question, the Wahhabis contented themselves with raids on Nahis al Dhuwaibi, the chief of the Harb, who was encamped in the Shammar country, doubtless in expectation of the various unconsidered trifles which the turmoil in Hail might expose within reach of his greedy Badawin. Meanwhile the intrigues of Salih ibn Muhanna with the Turks had produced a reaction in Buraida, and Ibn Sa'ud, being invited to take cognisance of the matter, was able to secure his person and send him off in custody to Riyadh. His cousin, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah abal Khail, was made Governor in his place; and shortly afterwards Mit'ab ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Rashid, who had succeeded his father at Hail, sued for peace, which was agreed to on the terms that Jabal Shammar should remain independent under the Rashid dynasty, and that the rest of Najd, including the Qasim, should be subject to Ibn Sa'ud. The latter had, however, no sooner returned to Riyadh than he received news of a treasonable correspondence between Faisal al Duwish and the Turks, who were doing their utmost to secure some sort of permanent standing in the desert. This scheme was nipped in the bud by the launching of a strong expedition against the Mutair chief and the mopping up of some of his tribal encampments. The Turks then turned their attention to Ibn Rashid, seeing that the negotiations with the Wahhabi ruler were producing and likely to produce no result. It seems that Sidqi Pasha and his force had remained at their camp at Shihiya, eastward of the Nafud and Dahna; but now another representative, Sami Pasha, was instructed to proceed from Madina to Hail to discuss matters with Ibn Rashid, who readily agreed to the demand that the Qasim should be under Turkish control. Sami now demanded an interview with Ibn Sa'ud, which took place at Bukairiya, and produced no result except an uncompromising declaration by the Wahhabi prince that he would have no Turkish meddling in the Qasim. Sami Pasha offered a bribe, and was surprised at its scornful refusal; he was still more surprised at receiving soon afterwards an ultimatum asking him to quit Arabia on pain of attack. He now sent some of his officers to the Wahhabi chief to remind him that they were his guests and had no hostile intentions. This somewhat changed the situation, and the month of Ramdhan provided time for further reflection, Ibn Sa'ud remaining at 'Anaiza for the fast. But Sami was now in active correspondence with Mit'ab ibn Rashid with a view to the withdrawal of his force to Hail. This by no means suited the plans of Ibn Sa'ud, who demanded that the Turkish force should either accept his hospitality in the Sirr district, where they would be beyond the reach of Ibn Rashid, or that he should be allowed to provide the necessary transport for its immediate conveyance to Basra or Madina, as preferred. The alternative to the acceptance of one or other of these demands was war. The Turkish officers were in no mood for further fighting in the inhospitable desert, and their pressure forced

Sami to yield and to accept the offer of transport on the condition that Ibn Sa'ud should undertake full responsibility for the safe arrival of both personnel and equipment at the destinations indicated. That was easily arranged, and the 'Iraq contingent was detained at Buraida until news should be received of Sami's safe arrival at Madina, this precaution being necessary to prevent the latter from diverting his march to Hail. The arrangements were carried out without a hitch, and in due course letters were exchanged between Sultan 'Abdul Hamid and 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Sa'ud, which, with the thanks of the one and the despatch of a delegation by the other, finally marked the withdrawal of the Sublime Porte from all active interest in the wilds of Central Arabia. For nearly three years the Turks had persisted in an utterly forlorn venture, and had lost more good troops from disease and hunger than from active operations, but the young Wahhabi ruler, who at this stage was barely twenty-seven years of age, had proved too much for the seasoned guiles of the Ottoman Empire, whose only footing in Arabia was now the province of Hasa, whither at about this time Saiyid Talib al Naqib, a scion of the leading family of Basra, was sent as Mutasarrif of the (Turkish) "province of Najd."

Meanwhile the collapse of the Turkish effort to establish a footing in Najd and the failure of Mit'ab ibn Rashid to show any result for his intriguing with the Sublime Porte were beginning to produce results at Hail itself, where only the danger of an imminent attack by Ibn Sa'ud and the worse alternative of a Turkish military occupation of the town in the nominal interests of the Prince had prevented an earlier outbreak of rebellion against the latter. Now the threat of a Wahhabi attack had been disposed of by the agreement already referred to, and the Turks had gone. There was nothing to restrain the impatience of those who sought to make capital for themselves out of the weakness of their own house, once and so recently so great. For nearly seventy years ‘Ubaid, the brother of the first ‘Abdullah of Hail, and after him his son Hamud had been veritable pillars of the Shammar state, which they had served with a fidelity altogether admirable and with the most selfless devotion. Many had been the occasions when any ambitions they might have harboured at the expense of the house of ‘Abdullah ibn Rashid might have been gratified without grave scandal; but they were loyal to the core, and, though they never ruled in Hail, their memory is held in high honour in their country to this day, in company with that of only the greatest of its rulers; and about them hangs as it were a halo of romance, for they were poets of high repute among the ballad-makers of modern Najd. Yet it was the sons of Hamud who laid the axe at the root of the already tottering tree of the Shammar state which their forbears had so laboured to grow.

Majid, the eldest of them, whom we have already met in command of the Shammar troops on the occasion of Ibn Sa‘ud's attack on ‘Anaiza, seems to have held aloof from the machinations of his brothers; and it was Sultan, the second son, who opened the ball of revolution and counter-revolution which was to drench the palace of the Rashids in blood for a period of two years. At the very end of 1906 or in January 1907 he managed to encompass the murder of the ruling Amir, Mit‘ab ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz and his brother Mish‘al; and a few months later the ever-present risk of revenge was further lessened by the assassination of another brother, Muhammad; while the last of the four brothers, Sa‘ud, would certainly have suffered a similate fate had he not been smuggled out of the country to Madina by a faithful slave. Similarly the infant son of Mit'ab, named 'Abdullah, was saved from the general holocaust which raised Sultan to the throne. The latter's reign was, however, a season of chaos and dishonour. The Qasim was irrevocably lost, and even Khaibar, hitherto subject to Hail, took heart to expel the Shammar Governor and tax-collector, while in the capital itself there was active faction-fighting and rapidly increasing commercial and economic decadence. The pilgrim caravans no longer passed through Jabal Shammar, preferring the better-governed Qasim as their halfway stage to Mecca; and, finally, the outlying settlements were helplessly exposed to raids by the Wahhabi tribes. Such a state of affairs could not last indefinitely, and Sultan's ill-begun and ill-conducted reign was brought to a violent end by his murder at the hands of his own brothers, Sa'ud and Faisal, in January 1908. Sa'ud ascended the throne, while Faisal was sent as Governor to the northern settlement of Jauf; but there was to be no peace in Hail, where the growing chaos produced yet another revolutionary movement, led by a family destined to play a prominent part in the history of Jabal Shammar during the following decade. The movement was launched in the name of the rightful heir to the throne, Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz, now only a child of ten; and his champions were the various members of the Subhan family, one of whom, Hamud, had married his sister, Nura, apparently the only daughter of 'Abdul 'Aziz. His right-hand man was his second cousin, Zamil ibn Subhan, who ultimately married Sa'ud's mother as her fourth husband, the first three having been the great Amir Muhammad himself, his successor 'Abdul 'Aziz, and the murderer and successor of the latter's son, namely Sultan.

Strange indeed are the matrimonial complications of the royal houses of Arabia!

Hamud and Zamil experienced little difficulty in collecting a party favourable to the claims of the child Sa'ud, with whom and an army they appeared before Hail in September 1908. Their associates within the walls immediately started a rising, in the course of which the reigning Amir, Sa'ud ibn Hamud, was killed and all the members of his family within reach were put to death. The rest, including Faisal and Dhari, fled to Riyadh, and the young Sa'ud was proclaimed ruler of Hail under the regency of Hamud. A few months later the latter died of poison, and the regency vested in Zamil, a man of great qualities, who, in spite of the difficult circumstances in which he was called upon to rule, gradually raised the Shammar state from the abyss into which it had sunk during the past decade to something of its old position and prosperity. Nevertheless, the beginning of his stewardship was a period of distress. Jauf and the Wadi Sirhan district were wrested from his hands at the end of 1909 by Nuri Sha'lan, the chief of the Ruwala 'Anaza; and in the same year Taima was occupied, at the request of its inhabitants, by a Turkish garrison. Zamil, however, made strenuous efforts to stabilise the situation, and was wise enough, after a few months of skirmishing in the early months of 1910, to make peace with Ibn Sa'ud. This left him free to recover Taima from the Turks, which he did in the same spring with considerable violence. He was not, however, destined to recover the oasis of Jauf, in which direction he was for some years constantly engaged in hostilities with the Ruwala; but for the most part these years were fruitfully occupied in creating and consolidating peace and prosperity within the frontiers of Jabal Shammar itself, and, slowly but surely, as Ibn Sa'ud grew from strength to strength and the Great War drew near, the house of Rashid lapsed into a natural dependence on and alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Its doom was sealed, and except for a few trifling incidents which created the impression that perhaps the old spirit was not altogether dead, Hail disappears into the background of the Arabian stage until in 1921 it was once more dragged before the footlights for the final *coup de grâce.*

For all practical purposes Ibn Sa'ud at the end of 1906 found himself master of Najd, with little to fear from either of his only serious enemies, the Shammar and the Turks; and he could devote all his attention henceforth to the consolidation and development of his dominions. The attitude of Muhammad abal Khail, the Governor of Buraida, was one of the first matters to engage his attention in connection with a treasonable understanding between him and Faisal al Duwish, the Mutair chief. Coming up to the Qasim on hearing of this matter, he found the gate of the great fort of Buraida closed against him, but, obtaining admittance by the connivance of a doorkeeper, he soon had the local Governor grovelling at his feet for mercy, which was duly granted, with a warning as to the inevitable consequences of a repetition of his disloyalty. He then turned his attention to the Mutair, and crushed Faisal al Duwish by a sudden attack in the neighbourhood of Majma'a in Sudair, spoiling him and his tribesmen mercilessly until the chiefs came in in a body to make formal submission. But no sooner had he reached Riyadh than he received news of further trouble in the north, where, under the active instigation of Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait, whose chief concern was to preserve some sort of balance of power in Central Arabia, Sultan ibn Rashid had formed a league with the Governor of Buraida and the Mutair for another effort to wrest the dominion from the hands of the Wahhabi leader. Ibn Sa'ud hastily mustered a force of townsmen, reinforced by strong contingents of the 'Ataiba and Qahtan tribes, and marched north by way of the Sirr district and Mudhnib to 'Anaiza, where he learned that Ibn Rashid was between him and Buraida. Without a pause he continued his march, and engaged the enemy near the dense palm-groves of Sabakh, without definite result, though in the course of the action his horse fell heavily with him and damaged his collar-bone. Nothing daunted, he marched against the Mutair, who had come up to Tarafiya, and defeating them in the field, he utterly destroyed their camp, where he lay the night in agony from his injury. But he was not allowed to rest, for the enemy came up from Buraida during the night, and a fierce battle lasted till dawn, when Ibn Rashid, having failed to shake the Wahhabi position, withdrew with a loss of 300 men. This action took place in April 1907. Ibn Sa'ud, leaving Ibn Rashid to regain Hail unpursued, returned to Buraida, and settled down there to teach its unstable inhabitants the consequences of being in arms against him. The surrounding villages were thoroughly looted and the cattle of Buraida were appropriated in their pastures by the Wahhabis. The people, thoroughly weary of the struggle, would gladly have made peace with Ibn Sa'ud, but Muhammad abal Khail was able to dominate the town with the help of the Shammar garrison which had been left behind for its protection; and the marching and counter-marching of the contending forces ran their dreary course through the months that followed. Early in 1908, however, and just before his own assassination, Sultan ibn Rashid sued for peace, which was arranged on the old terms; and Ibn Sa'ud was free to deal with Buraida. In May, with the help of traitors in the town, who opened the gate at the hour of the evening prayer, his forces effected an entry, and occupied points of vantage commanding the entrance to the fort and the houses of the Governor and his chief supporters. After a night of uncertainty the leading citizens came forward to save the town from street-fighting and massacre by offering their submission; but Muhammad abal Khail maintained his position behind the strong walls of the fort for twenty-four hours, when, seeing the hopelessness of his case, he offered to surrender on a guarantee of his personal safety, which was readily given. He was left free to depart whither he would, and he lost no time in removing with his family and his household goods to ʻIraq, where he sojourned in exile at Suq al Shuyukh. Buraida was at last once more in the effective occupation of Ibn Saʻud; and this time no further rope was to be given to the petty jealousies of its leading families, whose struggles for the governorship had ever been the cause of the disturbance of more essential loyalties. A trusty and worthy member of the royal house—no other, indeed, than ʻAbdullah ibn Jiluwi—was selected for the new post of Governor-General of the Qasim; and the province never again required the serious attention of the central Government.

The troubles of Hail during the latter part of this year necessitated the constant attention of the Wahhabi leader, who was now and again engaged in desultory hostilities on the fringes of Jabal Shammar, until the stabilisation of the situation in the north under the regency of the Subhan cousins enabled him to renew the previous agreements between the two states and to return in peace to his own capital. Again, however, he was to enjoy no rest, for, on arriving at Riyadh, he was informed of serious trouble at Hariq in the south. Here again family quarrels had suddenly flamed out into civil war, and murder followed murder, until the district and town were divided into armed camps, which disregarded the advice and orders of higher authority to submit their matter to the judgment of the courts. Accordingly Ibn Sa'ud set out at once for the scene of trouble, and laid siege for two months to the town of Hariq. With his small force a direct assault on the walls was out of the question, and the siege might have lasted indefinitely had not a mine been run under the main fort. To save the women and children from needless destruction, he warned the rebellious inhabitants of the fate in store for them; and forthwith they surrendered, the leading members of the Hazzani families being taken away by Ibn Sa'ud to enjoy for a space his hospitality at Riyadh.

The early months of 1910 were, however, to bring more trouble in their train, and, as so often happens in a pastoral country like Arabia, climatic conditions were a contributing factor of unrest, if not the actual cause thereof. The failure of the rains throughout the country had been followed by a severe drought, which carried off a large proportion of the country's cattle, including very many of the royal camels. Ibn Sa'ud's capacity for rapid movement was therefore reduced by the same economic conditions which had produced a growing tendency on the part of his subjects to keep themselves alive by raiding each other. And advantage was naturally taken of such conditions by any malcontents there might be under the Wahhabi régime. The most important of these were various members of the 'Araif branch of the royal house, which was doubtless smarting under a sense of indignity owing to its deliberate exclusion from all high offices of state and the relegation of its scions to the category of honoured guests of their cousin, who sat on the throne of their own grandfather. Such jealousies were almost inevitable, but Ibn Sa'ud was probably wise in giving them no opening for serious ebullition in circumstances which might have made them a menace to the state, for in Arabia provincial governors can often make themselves dangerously powerful by becoming popular. At the same time, idleness was not perhaps the best diet for the disgruntled, though their situation made them comparatively innocuous unless they were prepared to make an open profession of disloyalty. This season of general drought did indeed prepare the way for a manifestation of their simmering discontent. The 'Ajman tribe, intimately connected with the 'Araif by marriage in several generations, had sought to alleviate their seasonal distress by raiding into the territory of Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait, who complained to Ibn Sa'ud. The latter had meanwhile been arranging his plans for an attack on Hail, or rather on the Shammar camp in the eastern desert, in collaboration with Shaikh Fahad ibn Hadhdhal of the 'Amarat and Shaikh Nuri ibn Sha'lan of the Ruwala, and it is probable that Zamil ibn Subhan was countering this move by encouragement of the 'Ajman to maintain an obdurate front against the representations of Mubarak and the orders of Ibn Sa'ud. Such intriguing doubtless influenced those members of the 'Araif who were out in the pastures with their tribal in-laws; and the position was still further complicated by an understanding between Ibn Rashid and the powerful Muntafiq Shaikh, Sa'dun Pasha.

Of part of the operations that ensued during the spring months of 1910 we have the eye-testimony of a young British officer, Captain G. E. Leachman, afterwards of Mesopotamian fame, who was travelling in the desert with a small Shammar escort when he and his companions were captured by the 'Amarat, who had come down in pursuance of the general plan of campaign above referred to. A few days later he was present in the ‘Amarat camp when the whole might of the Shammar swept over and overwhelmed it; and some weeks later, after a sojourn in the camp of Ibn Rashid, he returned to ‘Iraq through the scene near Ghuraibiya of a sharp conflict between a Wahhabi detachment and the Muntafiq. This seems to have been the whole extent of the active fighting of this campaign; and there was no actual clash between the ‘Araif and Ibn Sa‘ud, a peaceful arrangement being secured eventually through the good offices of Mubarak, who had now forgotten or set aside his dreams of an Arabian balance of power in a more pressing interest of his own. The Turkish revolution of 1908 had given birth to an Arab nationalist movement of independence both in Syria and ‘Iraq, and the leaders of the movement in the latter country were Mubarak himself, Shaikh Khaz‘al ibn Mardao of Muhammara (Persian territory), and the redoubtable Saiyid Talib al Naqib of Basra. The protagonist of the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress was Sa‘dun Pasha; but the history of the developments in Turkish Arabia arising out of the constitutional revolution at Constantinople only concerns Arabia proper to the extent of the combinations of the various desert forces, whose outcome has already been stated. The desert war ended in a stalemate, which placed Ibn Sa‘ud on the defensive in the midst of a growing confusion of issues, and therefore at a disadvantage in comparison with his enemies, who at any rate had little or nothing to lose, while for him it was a matter of life and death and for the state which he had already done so much to build up. As may be imagined, his financial position was none too easy, while, in addition to the dangers already threatening him from the north and north-east, and even in his own house, a new enemy was now to appear from the west.

We have already seen that events in the Yaman had discouraged the Turks from pressing their policy of active participation in the affairs of Central Arabia; and now we have to go back a few years to pick up the thread of developments in the two Red Sea provinces of the Ottoman Empire, the Yaman and the Hijaz, and to weave it into the fabric of Arabian history. With the opening of the Suez Canal the Turks had been able to restore their authority in the Yaman by 1872, while in the Hijaz the reign of Sharif 'Abdullah (1858–77), son of the masterful Muhammad ibn 'Aun, proved to be the high-water mark of effective Ottoman rule in the holy province of Islam. It is from these points that we must now briefly survey the course of events which were once more to bring these two outposts of the Ottoman Empire into the full stream of Arabian history. The Turkish troops had encountered but little resistance in the occupation of the province of 'Asir, whose ruler, Muhammad ibn 'Aidh, had been promptly done to death after his surrender; and the advance on San'a had been effected almost without fighting by Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha, who had been ordered to proceed to the Yaman capital in consequence of an appeal for help against rebellious elements by the ruling Imam, 'Ali ibn Mahdi. The latter soon found that he had saved himself from the mere threat of danger to his throne only to lose all but the merest shadow of sovereignty to those who had been obliging enough to hasten to his assistance. Nevertheless such Walis as Isma'il Haqqi Pasha (1878–82) seem to have managed to direct affairs in the Yaman without serious offence to the ruling house and the classes supporting it; and the Turks probably made a great mistake in dismissing Isma‘il from the post in consequence of his proposals for replacing the Turkish garrisons with Arab levies. After a succession of good, bad and indifferent governors, however, he was destined to return to the Yaman as Wali in 1890, and there to die in the same year on the eve of the outbreak of the most serious rising that had confronted the Turks in this distant part of their Empire since the re-establishment of their authority by Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha. The causes of this revolt, which spread like wild-fire throughout the country, are somewhat obscure, though probably generally attributable to a general dislike of the laxity of the Turkish officials and of their almost universal corruption. Its inception was, however, the work of a single man, Muhammad al Mansur ibn Yahya Hamid al Din, who was of the leading Rassite dynasty, though not himself descended from any recent holder of the chief Imamate of San‘a. He appears to have had an intensive religious training under all the most prominent of the Yaman divines, and was about fifty years old at the time of his raising the standard of revolt against Turkey early in 1891. Making his headquarters at Sa‘da, he was soon in the field with practically the whole of the Zaidi tribes of the districts north and south of San‘a. For nearly a year confusion reigned throughout the country. San‘a itself was besieged and reduced to extremities of hunger and destitution, while almost daily encounters took place round its walls or in its near neighbourhood between the tribesmen and the Turkish troops; and elsewhere every Turkish garrison and detachment was besieged or attacked when it came out into the open. At first the seriousness of the situation seems not to have been fully realised by the Ottoman authorities, but at length there was no mistaking the import of the

ising; and Ahmad Faizi Pasha, who had already had
short experience of the Yaman in the capacity of
cting Wali, was despatched to the scene with the
itle of Wali and a strong force with which to assert
imself and the authority of the Sultan. He had to
ght his way to his destination, but everywhere he
rushed any opposition that confronted him, and at
ength he relieved and entered San'a. His proclama-
ion of an amnesty for those who laid down their arms
orthwith and retired to their homes quietly met with
large and immediate response; and he was then left
ith only a few centres of disturbance to deal with.
Ie dealt with them faithfully, as their ruins attest to
his day. As many as 300 villages are said to have
een destroyed during the period of Ahmad Faizi's
ffice. Meanwhile an exchange of letters took place
etween the Sultan and Imam Muhammad, in which
he former warned his rebellious vassal of the futility
f taking up arms against the might and majesty of
he Ottoman Empire, while the latter replied that he
ad been driven to such drastic action only by the
religious, immoral and corrupt practices of the
epresentatives of the Calif-Sultan. The latter was
ot altogether unimpressed by these representa-
ions, and overtures were made to the Imam for a
eaceful understanding; but his insistence on the
eintroduction of Shar' law in place of the Ottoman
odes proved a fatal stumbling-block to a *rapproche-
ent*, and Ahmad Faizi Pasha continued to govern
ith a strong hand, building a series of forts to secure
e military ascendancy of the Government. The
rade of Hudaida and even Aden had, of course, been
eriously affected by the disturbances in the hinter-
nd on which they wholly depended; and a succes-
on of droughts and locust visitations had completed
e havoc wrought by war. The Yaman was once

more under effective control, but it continued to sulk and simmer with suppressed discontent. Its prisons were full, and many of its leading divines and citizens were sent away to languish in exile.

For six years Ahmad Faizi ruled his subjects with a rod of iron, until 1897, when he was relieved by Husain Hilmi Pasha, who immediately introduced a milder régime and removed from office those who had been most prominent in carrying out the forceful policy of his predecessor. The local officials were once more allowed to wear their national head-dress and costumes in place of the fez and trousers of Turkish officialdom; and alms were distributed to the poor, who had been reduced to extremities by the general economic collapse of the country. Nevertheless there was a strong party among the Turkish officials who were far from approving the new régime, and their leader, ‘Abdullah Pasha, the commandant of the troops, was not slow to intrigue against his nominal chief in correspondence with the authorities at Constantinople. In 1900 accordingly the too-popular Wali was recalled to make way for another period of strong rule, which soon produced the usual crop of discontent and tribal disturbance. The telegraph line to Hudaida was cut by the Zaraniq tribesmen, and for some time a state of war rendered the main road unfit for use; meanwhile, however, ‘Abdullah Pasha, for strategic reasons, conferred a definite boon on the country by extending the telegraph line from San‘a southwards to Ta‘izz. But towards the end of 1903 he seems to have incurred the displeasure of the Sublime Porte by his too great complaisance towards British pretensions in the hinterland of Aden, and he was recalled from his post, though this did not prevent the completion of arrangements for the demarcation of the boundary between the Yaman and the Aden

Protectorate, which was duly carried out (though to this day it has never been recognised by the Imam) by the end of 1905.

'Abdullah Pasha was succeeded by Taufiq Pasha, who made no change in his methods of administration, and was content to look on while the once-prosperous country entrusted to his care languished under the combined effect of official rapacity and insecurity and drought. Every attempt to reason the Imam Al Mansur Muhammad into acceptance of the Ottoman régime met with failure, and he sulked in his distant corner, protesting at the impious methods of the Calif's representatives until he himself died at the end of May 1904, and was succeeded by his son, Yahya, who still rules the Yaman in our own times, and has thus lived to see the final collapse of the Ottoman régime, which he opposed in the beginning of his reign and then favoured and tried to save from its enemies. At the moment of his succession to the Imamate the country was in a truly parlous condition owing to drought and general scarcity, whose ravages were only partly met by the importation of grain from the Sudan and Abyssinia. Such conditions in such a country favour political disturbance, and the new Imam had the advantage of stored reserves of grain to support a campaign against the Turkish garrisons which had to depend on supplies from outside. Yahya must already have contemplated opposition to the Turks before he came to the throne of his father; and at any rate his orders for a general rising were issued in the month of his accession. They met with an immediate and enthusiastic response; the tribes rose as one man, and the towns and villages with Turkish garrisons were besieged and occupied one by one; even San'a was unable to stand a long siege, owing to the scarcity of provisions and the interruption of the routes to the coast. The Wali decided to surrender on terms, and sent his secretary with a staff officer to arrange matters with the Imam at Kaukaban. It was agreed that the Turkish troops should remain at Manakha pending the completion of regular peace negotiations with the Sublime Porte, and that San'a should be handed over to the Imam with all munitions and military stores. Accordingly the Imam's representatives entered the town amid evident signs of universal satisfaction at the departure and discomfiture of the Turks. There were, however, many difficulties to be faced, as the tribes, fully conscious of their contribution to the victory, insisted on the recognition of their rights and independence; and the Imam was engaged in trying to settle these matters of internal administration when news arrived of the appointment of Ahmad Faizi Pasha for a second spell as Wali of the Yaman, and of his arrival with fresh troops at Hudaida, himself fresh from an unsuccessful campaign and still more unsuccessful negotiations in Central Arabia, as we have already seen. It was not quite clear whether he had come to fight or negotiate, though it was obvious that he had been sent to restore Turkish prestige in such manner as he might find most feasible in the circumstances; and circumstances soon dictated his proper course of action. He met with no opposition on the way up to Manakha, where he joined up with the old garrison of San'a; but once there he found the Arabs eager to try conclusions with their old enemy, in the hope of avoiding a second dose of his administration. They laid siege to Manakha, while Ahmad Faizi thought less of them than of his own plans for an advance on San'a, which, as a matter of fact, he re-entered at the head of his troops without the slightest opposition, as the Imam Yahya deemed discretion the better part of valour and withdrew to a safe distance, in the hope of retaining by negotiation vhat he could not hope to hold in arms against his suzerain. He had not misjudged the situation, as the Turks were only too anxious to come to a reasonable arrangement enabling them to relax their active control of a country which had been well-nigh ruined and whose population, at any rate that of the towns, had been reduced by death, from one cause or another, by some 50 per cent. The Turkish troops, and especially the Arab contingents which had already overdone the normal term of foreign service, were beginning to show signs of mutiny, and considerable numbers of them had to be allowed to depart. And ever and again some rising in one or other of the many scattered towns of the highlands served to remind the authorities at Constantinople that at any moment their experiences of the recent past might be renewed under the instigation of so vigorous a personality as the Imam Yahya. Accordingly in 1906 a formal deputation visited the Yaman to ascertain the terms on which the latter would agree to a lasting and honourable peace. The terms he proposed amounted in effect to a demand for a mediatised status for the country, with no privilege reserved for the Turks but that of defending it against foreign aggression; and, of course, the negotiations broke down, but in the autumn of 1907 'Abdul Hamid returned to the charge by sending a mission of selected Ulama from Mecca to use their influence in favour of an accommodation. This move, combined with the recall of Ahmad Faizi Pasha—a step doubtless suggested to the Sultan by the Meccan mission—produced the desired result in the following year. The Imam's chief demand—namely, the restoration of the Shar' law throughout the Yaman—was conceded by the new Wali, Hasan Tahsin Pasha, who thus inaugurated the peace which had so long been sought in vain. Mild by nature, he had received orders to respect the susceptibilities of the Imam and his people, and San‘a and the outlying towns entered on a two-year period of tranquillity and progress; but the Turks seemed to be obsessed with an innate inability to leave well alone, and in May 1910 the recall of Hasan Tahsin and the appointment in his place of Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha was the signal for a recrudescence of the old troubles, the recital of which must be left for a later section of this chapter. Apart from the occasional diversion of Turkish attention from other fields of activity which it provided, the Yaman, now slowly approaching the threshold of independence, played but little part on the main stage of Arabian history; and for all practical purposes it might have been in another continent.

The case was very different with the Hijaz, to which we must now turn. There, as we have seen, the Turks had, owing to serious disturbances at Jidda, resulting in the murder of several foreign consuls, been forced to assert themselves against the dominant influence of the Sharifs of Mecca, whose prestige and power had greatly increased under Muhammad ibn ‘Aun. Under the latter's son, ‘Abdullah, Turkish control of the administration became complete; and ‘Abdullah's brother, Husain, who succeeded on his death in 1877, continued his policy of subservience to Ottoman authority until he was murdered in 1880 by local malcontents as a protest against the vesting of all authority in the Turkish officials. The Sublime Porte now recalled the Dhawi Zaid line to the Meccan Amirate by installing ‘Abdul Muttalib ibn Ghalib, who had already had experience of the post from 1851 to 1856 during a temporary eclipse of Muhammad ibn

Aun. This experiment, however, did not produce happy results, and in 1882 the Wali, ‘Uthman Nuri Pasha, was constrained to unseat him in favour of yet another son of Muhammad ibn ‘Aun, known to history as ‘Aun al Rafiq, whose reign of twenty-three years was one long story of intrigue against his Ottoman overlords. At his instigation the tribes of the Hijaz fell into a state of uncontrollable anarchy; the roads became terribly unsafe for Turks, pilgrims and peaceful citizens alike; murders were of frequent occurrence, and even Europeans did not escape molestation. Huber, the distinguished French explorer of Arabia and the discoverer of the famous Taima inscription, was murdered by his Badawin escort at Rabigh in 1884, while in 1895 a party of consuls was murderously assaulted by some Badawin within a few yards of the walls of Jidda itself, an Indian Vice-consul and the Russian Consul losing their lives. Most of the trouble could be traced directly to the Sharif, but the Turks were powerless to bring him to order. In 1891 the Egyptian Khedive, ‘Abbas Hilmi Pasha, visited the Hijaz to perform the pilgrimage, and showed the progressive tendencies of the suzerain whom he nominally represented by arranging for the establishment of a piped water supply at Jidda; but even this salutary reform was met with contempt and opposition by certain vested interests in Jidda, where the rain-water reservoirs provided their owners with welcome opportunities of extortion from the pilgrims, and by the Badawin, who sought insecurity at all costs as their best stock-in-trade. Both elements had the active though cleverly concealed support of ‘Aun, whose one object was to make the position of the Turks insupportable and untenable. Another, and perhaps more important, result of ‘Abbas Hilmi's visit was the decision, arrived at in the following year, to transfer the district of Midian from the Egyptian administration to that of the Hijaz, with which it has ever since remained.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Turkey, as we have seen elsewhere, had been encouraged by the example of other Powers striving for political advantages in the Near East to make on her own account a serious bid for the strengthening and rejuvenation of her own Empire. And no single act of the Ottoman authorities at this period was fraught with more far-reaching possibilities than the decision to build a strategic railway from Damascus, destined in due course to be linked up with the projected Constantinople–Baghdad line, to the Hijaz. Acting under the convenient cover of religious zeal for the comfort of pilgrims making the arduous journey to the holy cities of Islam, ‘Abdul Hamid launched his Hijaz Railway prospectus with a pious call for voluntary subscriptions from all parts of the Islamic world at the beginning of the twentieth century; and in 1901 the order was given for the construction of the line, which was actually begun under the supreme direction of the German Meissner Pasha in 1904. Naturally every obstacle was placed in the way of the scheme by the Badawin on the way, who saw in it a serious danger to the continuance of their time-honoured rights of levying blackmail on the old pilgrim routes, and by Sharif ‘Aun, who envisaged the unwelcome prospect of being subjected to the closer control of the Sublime Porte. Nevertheless the railway actually reached Madina in 1908, and the Turks, apparently exhausted by their effort, lost an opportunity of putting an end for ever to their troubles in the Hijaz with the decision to suspend work on the last lap of the line from Madina to Mecca. ‘Aun al Rafiq had died in 1905, but his nephew and successor, ‘Ali

Pasha, the son of ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Aun, had continued his policy of obstructing the railway project. At the end of 1907 he was summarily dismissed from his post and sent to reside in exile at Cairo, where he has lived in retirement ever since; and in his place ‘Abdillah, yet another of the sons of Muhammad ibn ‘Aun, was appointed only to die on his way to take up his post in the following year. ‘Abdul Hamid now resorted to a "safe" appointment, but he was himself on the eve of events which would sweep him off his throne, and his last nominee to high imperial office was destined to play a leading part in the shattering of his Empire. Husain was the eldest son of ‘Ali, second son of Muhammad ibn ‘Aun. With little prospect of ever reaching the Amirate of Mecca, he had spent his early years among the Badawin of the Hijaz, and much of the rest of his life had been lived in the Court circles of Stambul. He was already nearly sixty years of age when he was nominated to the vacant Amirate of Mecca in 1908; and it was only then that he began to live. He was not without ambition; and he was full of ability and craft that might have been called statesmanship if they had not been accompanied by other ruinous qualities. In less than a decade he would be a king, and in less than another decade his kingdom would fall tumbling about his ears. Perhaps no man has ever tasted so fully of the sweet and bitter of this world in the last quarter of an octogenarian life.

He began his period of office with exemplary restraint, gaining the good opinion both of his own subjects and of the Turks. He discouraged any idea of bringing the railway nearer to his own den, but otherwise he showed himself a loyal and capable vassal of the Turkish Government, though his real master was no longer Sultan ‘Abdul Hamid, who in

July 1908 had been compelled to grant a constitution to his subjects, and had been dethroned in April of the following year in favour of his more amenable brother, Muhammad Rashad. The Turkish authorities in the Hijaz were quite content to see Husain establish a growingly effective authority over the unruly Badawin, provided he himself observed the forms of loyalty; and in 1910 and 1911 he had an opportunity of demonstrating both his loyalty and his military and administrative capacity when the preoccupations of the Porte with the Tripolitan war against Italy provided a reasonable excuse for another rising in the Yaman, which found considerable support in the new Idrisi power on the 'Asir coast. In 1837 one Ahmad al Idris, a man of great learning and the founder of a religious sect since known by his family name, had died at Sabiya in the Tihama, and his descendants had grown wealthy and powerful on the gifts of the pilgrims who flocked to his tomb in their thousands. It was not, however, until early in the twentieth century that their purely religious status began to assume a temporal aspect under the original saint's grandson, Muhammad al Idrisi, whose pretensions were more or less ignored by the Turks, though they were encouraged by the Imam Yahya, expectant of his support when the time should come for a further bid for power. It was unfortunate for the Turks that their troubles with Italy should have coincided with the moment when the harshness of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, Wali of the Yaman, had begun to be definitely intolerable. Early in 1910 the Imam had given the signal for a tribal revolt, while in the north Muhammad al Idrisi co-operated by marching on Abha, the highland headquarters of the Turkish provincial administration. 'Izzat Pasha was immediately sent by the Turkish Government to cope with the rising in the Yaman, and in due course, after some severe fighting, he reoccupied San'a, which had fallen into the hands of the Imam; but he had come with instructions to arrive at a friendly understanding with the latter, and the negotiations which ensued ended in the signing during the autumn of 1911 of a treaty satisfactory to all parties at Du'an. The concessions made to the Imam were such that throughout the Great War he clung faithfully to his Turkish allegiance in spite of all the blandishments of the British authorities at Aden; and his eventual reward was to reap the full benefit of the Turkish defeat at the hands of the Allies. By loyalty to the suzerain power he thus achieved effectively what he and his immediate predecessors had never been able to achieve by desultory opposition and rebellion.

Meanwhile affairs had not gone well with the Idrisi rising in 'Asir. Sa'id Pasha had landed at Jizan as soon as the subversive tendencies of Muhammad al Idrisi had become known, but he had apparently contented himself with accepting at its face value the lip service offered by the pretender, and had gone off to join the forces of 'Izzat Pasha in the Yaman. The Idrisi now mustered the tribes in real earnest, and set up an administration to collect taxes and rule the Tihama in his name. His forces now spread over the country and captured place after place from the small and scattered Turkish garrisons, until, in November 1910, Abha alone remained to the Turks. This town was immediately besieged, and after some months Sulaiman Pasha, the district Governor, surrendered, despairing of relief. The news of this reverse made a deep impression on the Turkish Wali of Mecca, who appealed to Sharif Husain to help him in his trouble. Rapidly collecting a force of 'Ataiba, Harb and Mutair tribesmen, Husain began his march about the middle of April 1911, and spent a month at the port of Qunfidha, harrying the countryside and giving the local tribes time to make their submission. Early in June he gave the order for an advance on Abha. Severe fighting took place in the many difficult passes on the way; and meanwhile Abha had surrendered to and been occupied by the Idrisi forces under Saiyid Mustafa; but the steady and successful advance of Husain resulted in the precipitate departure of the latter, and Sulaiman Pasha had been able to reoccupy the town when Husain arrived before it in the middle of July. The whole country now made its submission and surrendered the arms which had been provided by the Idrisi, thanks to the help of the Italians, who maintained a blockade of the Arabian coast as a diversion of the Tripolitan war. The Sharif now profited by the occasion to make a triumphal march through the highlands by way of demonstrating the might and majesty of the Ottoman Government and himself. The return march was through Bisha, Raniya and Turaba to Taif, which was reached in August; and Husain's signal success in this his first military venture on their behalf raised the hopes of the Turks that he might serve their interests in Central Arabia to better purpose than the now almost discredited house of Ibn Rashid. We next find him, therefore, in the Arabian desert, sowing the seeds of the whirlwind that would ultimately overwhelm him.

The situation in Najd was eminently propitious for the prosecution of his plans. After the general stalemate in the north-east, the most serious danger confronting Ibn Sa'ud was the revolt of his own cousins, the "'Araif," who had gone down to the southern districts, where friendly memories of Sa'ud ibn Faisal were most likely to gain them adherents in their bid for the throne. Ibn Sa'ud had himself proceeded to the district of Hariq to crush the movement in its infancy, but he was in need of greater force than he had at his disposal, and he had accordingly sent his brother, Sa'd, into the 'Ataiba region to recruit reinforcements. Meanwhile, in June 1912, Sharif Husain had advanced into Najd with a force of Badawin and Hijaz townsfolk, with the full approval of the Turks, and had arrived as far as Quai'iya, in the Najd highlands, having sent messengers to Ibn Rashid calling upon him to create a diversion in his favour in the north. In ignorance apparently of these developments, Sa'd, with a small following, arrived in the 'Ataiba country, and walked straight into the arms of the enemy, who held him a prisoner. Ibn Sa'ud immediately left his force at Hariq under Fahad ibn Mu'ammar to watch the 'Araif, while he hastened to the rescue of his favourite brother. Husain, with Sa'd in his train, moved north by Sha'ra to the Washm border, and thence to the wells of 'Arqa, in the hope of a movement by Ibn Rashid before Ibn Sa'ud should be able to strike. Meanwhile he sent a messenger of peace to the latter to explain that he had no hostile intentions towards the Wahhabi state, though he was bound to exact its acknowledgment of the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire over at least the Qasim, and the payment of a nominal tribute as an outward and visible sign of such acknowledgment. The consequence of refusal would be that he would retire disappointed to the Hijaz, and would take Sa'd with him as evidence of the rejection of overtures so harmless and so reasonable. Ibn Sa'ud was in no position to bargain with one who held a hostage for whom he would willingly have given his own life. He accepted the conditions offered, acknowledged Turkish sovereignty over the Qasim and agreed to pay an annual tribute of 6000 Majidies (about £1000) on account of that province. Sa‘d was released and Ibn Sa‘ud was free to turn his attention to the revolt of his cousins in the south.

The Hazzani leaders, who had been interned at Riyadh for a space after the troubles at Hariq which have already been related, had lost little time after their return home in reopening the dissensions which had resulted in their removal from the scene. Simultaneously the ‘Araif pretenders had been baulked by the Governor of Kharj, Fahad ibn Mu‘ammar, in their design of setting up an independent government in that province, of which their grandfather had been Governor in the days of Faisal, and in which there was a party strongly disposed to support their claims. Failing to gain a footing here, they went down to Hariq, where they had no difficulty in collecting a band of malcontents with reinforcements from the neighbouring town of Hauta, notorious in the annals of Najd for the sturdy independence of its inhabitants. It was this movement which Ibn Sa‘ud had been watching when interrupted by the incursion of the Sharif, with the consequences already stated. On his return from the Qasim to Riyadh, where incidentally he made the acquaintance of Captain G. E. Leachman, who had followed him down from the north, he made hasty preparations for dealing with developments in the south, where the ‘Araif pretenders and the rebellious Hazazina had meanwhile established themselves in the oasis of Hariq. With a force of 1200 men he made a forced march to the scene of the trouble, and boldly launched an attack on the rebel position, which he captured almost by surprise. The ‘Araif, having no time to organise its defence, fled incontinently on horseback, and being refused admission to Hauta, which had no mind to saddle itself with the quarrels of others, continued their flight to the Aflaj, where

Faisal ibn Sa'd, one of the 'Araif cousins, had already secured the adhesion of a party in the oasis of Saih and had attempted hostilities against the capital of the province, Laila, which was held by the Governor, Ahmad al Sudairi. Ibn Sa'ud, halting on the way to show his flag at Hauta and marching through the town after its leading citizens had assured him of their loyalty, arrived in due course at Laila, where he heard that his Governor had already stamped out the embers of sedition and had actually captured Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz, the chief pretender, and many of the Hazzani rebels. The remaining members of the 'Araif had made good their escape, one of them (Turki ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz) going to the Hasa to raise the tribes, without any success, and the rest fleeing to Mecca, where they were welcomed by the Sharif with an eye to future developments. The prisoners were paraded before Ibn Sa'ud at Laila. Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz was immediately released and allowed to choose between remaining in the service of his cousin and joining those members of his family who had fled to Mecca; he chose the former alternative, and has since justified the strange lenience of Ibn Sa'ud by proving himself one of the staunchest and most fanatically loyal of his supporters. The Hazzani prisoners, however, had already once experienced their sovereign's grace; and for them there was no second pardon for their deliberate treason: they were executed there and then; and this, the only exception on record to Ibn Sa'ud's invariable rule of clemency, sometimes extravagant clemency, in the hour of victory, produced a profound impression throughout the territories under his rule. A short time was now devoted to removing the disturbing effects of the recent revolt on the tribal elements of the Dawasir; and Ibn Sa'ud then moved down to the Hasa border to neutralise the efforts of

Turki ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz to raise the 'Ajman for another attack on Najd. While he was so engaged he received an appeal from Mubarak of Kuwait for help against the growing pressure of Sa'dun Pasha, and he immediately moved up to Hafar al Batin. Dissensions had now begun to show themselves between the Muntafiq and the Dhafir under Mubarak ibn Suwait; and Ibn Sa'ud, making peace with the latter, advanced to the confines of 'Iraq to raid the client tribes of the Muntafiq at Kabida and near Zubair, until a Turkish deputation came out to beg him to desist. He then marched down to Jahra and on to the Hasa, where he attacked the 'Ajman elements operating under the instigation of Turki ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz, until the Turks again protested against his operations. He was not yet ready to take up their challenge, and returned to Riyadh.

In reality the suppression of the 'Araif revolt was the turning-point of Ibn Sa'ud's career. The wolf in sheep's clothing was a more real danger than the wolves prowling about on the confines of his estate, openly seeking to devour his substance. Now, however, he was free from any serious danger within the fold, and could devote himself to organising his people to meet the foreign threat which menaced their independence as much as it did his own sovereignty. He must have thought long and carefully in the midst of his troubles, seeking how to destroy the real enemy of Arabian unity, nothing less than the natural constitution of the Badawin tribes which formed the bulk of the Arabian population. It is curious that up to this point Ibn Sa'ud had practically made no capital, nor, indeed, sought to make any, out of religion, and that during this period up to 1912 we hear little of Wahhabism or of anything savouring of excessive strictness in the observance of the precepts of the true faith. We know that Ibn Sa‘ud had been brought up on the strictest lines as a devote Wahhabi by his father, but contact with a wider world during the impressionable period of adolescence had served doubtless to temper a sincere faith with a measure of broad-mindedness. Nevertheless, it is probable that when he came to consider the problem of the future government of his volatile and unruly subjects he turned to religion as the only possible effective binding force. His own religion has never been anything but completely sincere, but the new dispensation which he now sought to introduce into his country is almost certainly to be traced to policy rather than to any sudden access of fanaticism. He had doubtless discussed the matter fully both with his father, who had already begun to devote himself to a sedentary life of religious contemplation, and with the leading divines of Riyadh, whom he had specially propitiated some years previously by his marriage with a daughter of the line of Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhab. And it may be assumed that in both those directions he received every encouragement and incitement to base his temporal state on the firm rock of the one true faith. But the secular aspect of the scheme which he was now about to launch was the outcome of his own wrestling with a problem whose religious and political aspects he had deeply studied.

The Badawin could be roused to action by a call to arms in the name of their faith; but so long as they retained their nomad and pastoral character they could not be relied on for any permanent effort in the peace which would inevitably succeed the initial necessary war. At the same time the internecine struggles of the past decades, dating back to the death of Faisal, had wrecked the economic prosperity of Najd; and there was work to do if hands could be found to do it. And there was one factor of nomad society which was, and had been through the ages, absolutely constant—an inherent tendency to desert the weariness and hopelessness of pastoral occupations for the superior comforts of agriculture if land could be found to settle on. Hitherto this tendency had been exploited at the expense of the settled lands on the northern and north-eastern borders of the Arabian desert, where in ‘Iraq and Syria the impact of the warlike tribes of Arabia on the weaker agricultural elements of the "sown" has been manifest from the earliest times to our own. But henceforth Arabia herself was entitled to benefit from this natural tendency of her denizens if she could tempt them to stay within her borders instead of passing through her deserts into more hospitable lands; and accordingly Ibn Sa‘ud quite definitely envisaged an agrarian policy, with a double objective, namely the retention of his man-power for the benefit of his state, and the breaking-up of its nomad and tribal organisation in the interests of the whole community. The necessary spade-work was done by the priests and preachers sent forth by him and his father to warn the tribes of the dangers with which they were menaced by the Turks and other infidels, and to summon them to joint action in defence of their faith. Much of the seed fell on rocky ground and withered, and some fell by the wayside, with a like result; but some of it fell upon fertile soil, and the crop that grew from it was good if at first of small extent.

Ibn Sa‘ud was by no means discouraged by the small beginnings of a movement which might yet produce great results if it were properly husbanded; and in this year of 1912, when he had successfully countered the last menace to his immediate security, he was ready to garner in the first-fruits of his new policy. The desert wells of Artawiya were selected for the honour of being the first "refuge" of the faithful, who were ready to leave their all—which was little enough, in all conscience—to follow the banner of religion. The choice of the site was probably due to the fact that the majority of the converts to the new idea were of the Mutair tribe, in whose range it lay; but henceforth there was for them neither tribe nor kith nor kin, and they assumed the designation of Ikhwan, or "brethren," to emphasise the link that bound them together and would extend, without distinction of tribe or class, to all who professed the same principles. The sacred law of the Shar' was the sovereign authority in their community, superseding all the old customary laws of revenge and retaliation and blood-money and the rest of it, including hospitality and sanctuary. The outward and visible nucleus of the new colony was a little mosque built by the settlers themselves with the assistance of a small subsidy from Ibn Sa'ud's none too full treasury. Round this place of worship slowly and laboriously they built their little mud huts and marked out their tiny patches of ground for the equally laborious cultivation of grain for their immediate needs and young palms for the years to come, irrigating them from the neighbouring wells, which had never before been used for such a purpose. But perhaps the most attractive feature of the colony in the eyes of most of its first inhabitants was the free issue of arms and ammunition proportionate to the number of able-bodied citizens on the register of the mosque, which was also the local school, not only for the children, but primarily for the grown-ups determined to make amends for their misspent years by learning to read the sacred book. It was a strange hamlet, this little group of airless mud hovels housing a population which had never breathed anything but the pure desert air under the cover of the black-hair tabernacles; but slowly and steadily it grew into a village, and from a village to the dignity of a town, with a great circuit wall and a population reckoned now at 10,000 souls or more. To-day Artawiya is, as it were, the cathedral town of the Ikhwan movement, with a diocese comprising a hundred or more towns, villages and hamlets scattered over the vast desert spaces of Najd, to say nothing of the itinerant missions moving about with the tribes, teaching them the elements of their religion; but for all the subsequent developments the organisation of the colony has remained unchanged since its inception in 1912, and that organisation has remained the invariable model of all the colonies which have come into being since those days. It says much for the forethought of their author that his original plan has required no modification to keep pace with the changes of the years that followed its inception, and that to-day, as he then foresaw, the chief bulwark of his temporal power is the group of militant-salvationist agricultural colonies which have grown from the seed he planted at Artawiya in 1912. The man-power of those colonies, each of which is in effect the cantonment of a permanent territorial force, constitutes the bulk of what may be regarded as his regular army; each colony represents an effective weakening of the nomad tribes from which its population is derived; each represents, on the other hand, a definite and permanent increase of the general agricultural prosperity of the country, which is capable of almost indefinite augmentation; and, above all, each keeps alive, as the older haphazard communities of Najd have never done and can never do, the flame of religious zeal which in Arabia is the equivalent of a national spirit.

The Ikhwan movement is, indeed, a living monument of the genius of Ibn Sa'ud; and if, as may be justly claimed, the defeat of the 'Araif rebellion marked the definite ebb of the tide of foreign encroachment on the independence of Wahhabi Arabia, the founding of Artawiya may be regarded as the climax of a long and arduous process of political consolidation which ushered in an era of imperial expansion.

ACT III. EXPANSION

The creation of Artawiya was followed in the course of the next few years by the founding of similar colonies at other suitable places, where there was water and land available for cultivation. By the end of 1927, according to Amin Rihani, there were some seventy-three of such colonies in existence, with a male population which he computed at as many thousands, though it is improbable that the total population of these settlements, including men, women and children, much exceeds 100,000 souls—a figure which involves a standing army of nearly 50,000 men-at-arms. Be that as it may, we are only concerned for the moment with some nine colonies whose existence dates back to the first two or three years of the movement. It was these colonies that at the beginning embodied the new nationalist spirit of Arabia and formed the backbone of the military force on which Ibn Sa'ud could count for the realisation of his ideal of an Arab state united in support of its independence against the foreigner, the Turk, whose one object was to obstruct and prevent, if he could, the formation of an Arabian nation, and to maintain his imperial dominance over the land of the Arabs.

That Ibn Sa'ud had formulated his ideal is evident from correspondence which passed between him and the Wali of Basra, Sulaiman Shafiq Kamali Pasha, who had invited an expression of his opinion as to the best policy to pursue in connection with the troubles with the Idrisi. After criticism of the policy of disintegration followed by the Turks towards the Arabs, he had suggested a conference on neutral ground to discuss the question of the future of the Arab countries, with a view either to the formation of a single Arab state under a single ruler with the capacity for such a charge, or to the recognition of a series of separate states each under its natural leader. In either case the Arabs, assured of their racial independence under the general suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire, would be inclined to support the Turks in any trouble with their non-Muslim neighbours. The Turks missed this opportunity of securing the support of the Arabs, and preferred to continue in their old way of sowing dissension among the various chiefs, with a view to securing ultimately by conquest what they had so far signally failed to obtain either by force or by negotiation. They rightly regarded Ibn Sa'ud as the main stumbling-block in their path, and it was against him that they now sought to organise the dissident elements of the Arabian peninsula. Sharif Husain and Ibn Rashid were ready instruments to their hand; 'Ajaimi Pasha, the son and successor of the Muntafiq Sa'dun, was another; Faisal al Duwish of the Mutair tribe was easily won over to keep the desert in a ferment; and the 'Ajman tribe was at their service, with the remnants of the intransigeant 'Araif.

The provocation came from the allies of the Turks, particularly from Sharif Husain, who, in spite of the recent agreement, sent out his bands to maraud on the outskirts of his neighbour's territory and to give vicarious support to the ‘Araif, who had sought his hospitality. But it was Ibn Sa‘ud who, seeing the ubiquitous ramifications of the plot against his independence, took the initiative and struck where a blow would at once be least expected and most effective. In February 1913 he pitched his usual spring camp by the waters of Khafs, between the cliffs of the ‘Arma plateau and the skirts of Tuwaiq, raiding some encampments of the Murra tribe in the neighbourhood. Then suddenly he descended on the Hasa, and within a few hours the Hasa was his. Arriving at some wells three or four miles away from Hufuf at dusk on April 13th, 1913, with 600 men, he waited for the darkness before marching on the town, about whose defences he had secured all essential information from certain persons who had always acted as his commercial agents, notably the Qusaibi family. On the way they cut down a few palm trees to make into scaling-ladders, and in due course they were under the walls of the great fortress of Kut, utterly impregnable were its defenders not wrapped in slumber. Only four months previously Captain Leachman had passed through the place and found the Turks debonair and happy and full of easy-going confidence; but four hours of this night of April were sufficient to show how little they had reckoned with the facts of the situation. Ibn Sa‘ud divided his small force into three parts, and the sleepy sentries were soon awakened by the cold steel in their vitals; within the hour the assailants were masters of the Kut, whose garrison, aroused from sleep, took refuge with their families in the great mosque called Ibrahim Pasha. The turnover from Turkish to Wahhabi rule was proclaimed from the turrets to the astonished citizens, who hastened to make obeisance to the new ruler. And a Turkish officer captured by the first scaling-party was sent with a message to the Mutasarrif, or local Governor. Ibn Sa'ud was prepared to make all arrangements for the safe journey of himself and his troops to the coast if they were disposed to surrender quietly; if that alternative were unacceptable, he was determined to assault the forts in which they had taken refuge, and he was ready to spring the mine which he had driven under the great mosque where were most of the civilian officials and their families. The Mutasarrif did not hesitate, and the same day the last Turkish garrison of eastern Arabia, with the families and chattels of its officers and men, started out on its last journey to the coast. A single representative of the Wahhabi ruler accompanied it as guarantor of its safety on the road, and Ibn Sa'ud gracefully refrained from disarming the last soldiers of the "Daula," who marched out with all the honours due to a beaten foe, leaving only their artillery and military stores. The small garrison of the sea-port of 'Uqair surrendered at once to Ahmad ibn Thunaian, the representative of the Wahhabi ruler, who lost no time in arranging for the transport of the Turkish troops in sailing-boats to Bahrain; and within a few days the only other Turkish garrison on the coast surrendered the forts of Qatif to the force which appeared before them under 'Abdul Rahman ibn Suwailim. And thus, after an interval of forty-two years, the province of Hasa returned to the Wahhabi fold, and Ibn Sa'ud's dominions extended to the frontiers within which had run the writ of his grandfather Faisal. That extension brought him for the first time into direct diplomatic contact with Great Britain, and it appears that an exchange of formal courtesies took place at a meeting between Ibn Sa'ud and the British agent at Bahrain at 'Uqair. Conditions had greatly changed since the old days of the beginnings of British political influence on the Gulf coast of Arabia, and it was now clear that, dangerous as the Wahhabi propinquity to the sea might be, it might yet be encouraged to become a solid bar to the rapidly developing influence of Germany in the Arab provinces of the Turkish Empire. Even the Turks, chafing at their defeat and extrusion from Hasa, sought to conciliate the Wahhabi power, and in the autumn of 1913 Saiyid Talib of Basra was sent to conduct negotiations with Ibn Sa'ud at Subaihiya near Kuwait, which, in spite of the machinations of Mubarak, resulted in the signing of a treaty of friendship with a clause (the only important clause) requiring Turkey to supply Ibn Sa'ud with his requirements in the matter of funds and arms. At the same time the Wali of Basra (Sulaiman Shafiq Kamali Pasha) was signing an agreement with Ibn Rashid by which the latter undertook to make war on Ibn Sa'ud in return for a large supply of rifles; and Ibn Sa'ud himself, not to be outdone in the wiles of diplomacy, was aiming at a definite alliance for mutual assistance according to circumstances between himself and Great Britain, represented in the resulting unofficial discussion by Captain W. H. I. Shakespear, Political Agent at Kuwait. And it was not for nothing that Shakespear visited Riyadh during the winter of 1913–14 in the course of his great journey of exploration, which began at Kuwait and led him through Sudair to the Wahhabi capital, and thence *via* the Qasim and wide of Hail to Jauf, 'Aqaba, Sinai and Suez.

In Arabia this winter and the following spring and summer were months of lull before the storm. The world was slowly drifting to the edge of the great abyss, and the frail craft of its threadbare diplomacy was suddenly caught in the danger zone by a mere puff of wind from a petty Balkan state. The cry of peace was heard not in the din of the approaching storm, and European diplomacy foundered helplessly in the whirlpool of a world war. Arabia, ever reputed a country of constant strife and bloodshed, looked on aghast at a scene of carnage beside which its own bloodiest records paled into insignificance; and, as it looked on, the admiration of its people went out without stint to the military nations which, for all their idle chatter about peace, really did know something about war. At the beginning the talk of the desert and the oases was of the probable attitude of the Ottoman Empire; in the middle of October 1914 it was known that a British armada lay at anchor in the roads of Bahrain; a fortnight later the news came through that Turkey had entered the conflict on the side of Germany; and at the end of the first week of November Britain had come to grips with the Ottoman forces at the battle of Fao.

Ibn Sa'ud had already sent round feelers to the various Arab chiefs concerned suggesting a conference to consider and adopt a uniform policy based on the essential interests of Arabia; but the approaches to any such understanding had been definitely barred already by the unequivocal declaration by Ibn Rashid of his steadfast allegiance to the Ottoman Empire; and matters were not improved by an insidious and unfriendly excursion by the Amir 'Abdullah, the astute second son of Sharif Husain, to the confines of the Qasim. Ibn Sa'ud, having so far withheld a declaration of his intentions, found himself isolated once more. 'Ajaimi ibn Sa'dun had definitely declared for the Turks, owing to the unsatisfactory nature of the offer made to him by the British authorities as a *quid pro quo* for the services desired of him; and Britain had only secured the allegiance of the two weakest elements on the outskirts of Mesopotamia, Shaikh Khaz'al of Muhammara and Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait, who were both satisfied of her naval dominance of the situation. Ibn Sa'ud, looking far into the future, was disposed to accept the advances now freely made to him by the British authorities, and Sir Percy Cox, Chief Political Officer of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, was fully aware of the importance of securing if possible the active adhesion of the Wahhabi power to the British cause. Captain W. H. I. Shakespear, who had now returned to his post at Kuwait, was immediately sent to Ibn Sa'ud as British representative at his Court. The Wahhabi ruler welcomed him, and agreed to support the British cause by exerting all possible pressure on Ibn Rashid, who was already taking the initiative against him presumably on the advice and with the assistance of the Turks. Ibn Sa'ud took the field himself in January 1915, marching to the neighbourhood of Zilfi. Here he learned that Ibn Rashid lay not far off, and a few days later battle was joined at Jarrab. The Wahhabi cavalry carried all before them, and were soon in wild pursuit of the Shammar horsemen; but Ibn Rashid's infantry slowly and surely pushed back the opposing footmen on to their camp and the single mountain-gun which was supporting them in a desultory fashion. The Wahhabi force broke and fled in disorder, leaving their camp to the enemy; and Shakespear, who, dressed in his British uniform, was directing the fire of the gun, was left alone to sell his life dearly to the victorious foemen. His death in this first encounter of ally and enemy in the deserts of Arabia was a great loss to his country, but it was a disaster to the Arab cause. It must certainly be reckoned in the small category of individual events which have changed the course of history. Had he survived to continue a work for which he was so eminently fitted it is extremely doubtful whether the subsequent campaigns of Lawrence would ever have taken place in the west. Ibn Sa'ud's military superiority over the Shammar at this time will scarcely be called in question in view of the developments of the previous decade; and it is probable that a less tragic outcome of Shakespear's mission would have resulted in his being actively supported by Great Britain with money and arms. Had he then eliminated Ibn Rashid from the Arabian scene in the first year of the war, the Hijaz Railway on the west and north would have been at his mercy, and he might even have struck at the Turkish position in Syria to relieve the pressure on Kut. But history is concerned with realised events rather than with conjectures as to unfulfilled contingencies, and the fact has to be recorded that, rightly or wrongly, the death of Shakespear in this action discouraged Sir Percy Cox from further pressing the advantage he had secured by the alliance of Ibn Sa'ud. At the end of 1915 he met him personally at 'Uqair to conclude a treaty of friendship, whose acceptance by Ibn Sa'ud very nearly placed him and his state on a level with the other Arab chiefs and states on the Gulf coast and caused him much embarrassment in later years, inasmuch as he had agreed to allow Great Britain to conduct exclusively on his behalf such diplomatic intercourse with other Powers as might become necessary thereafter. By the treaty of December 1915 Britain all but achieved the completion of the political blockade of the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf, which had been her steady purpose for a hundred years. Her subsequent complications and difficulties in adjusting the differences of the various Arab elements, to which she stood committed by the same treaty, resulted in the instrument becoming a dead letter in fact many years before it was finally denounced by the Treaty of Jidda in 1927. For the moment the situation in Arabia was that Ibn Sa'ud stood by his policy of friendship with Great Britain, while not undertaking on her behalf any active operations against her enemies. In the desert itself Jarrab had created a position of stalemate, and Ibn Rashid, practically secure from an attack from the south, proved more useful to the Turks by harassing the fringes of the British army in 'Iraq, and, later, by smuggling supplies through to Damascus with the assistance of the ruler of Kuwait, where in January 1915 death had brought to an end the twenty-years sovereignty of Mubarak and placed his son, Jabir, on the throne. The latter, however, ruled but a year, and was succeeded, on his death in 1916, by his brother Salim, outwardly on good terms with the British authorities, but notoriously pro-Turk, hostile with a bitter hostility towards Ibn Sa'ud, and ever the chief obstacle to the successful enforcement of the economic blockade which the British army in Mesopotamia sought to impose on the desert frontier.

For all practical purposes Arabia ceased to figure prominently in the scheme of the war in Mesopotamia; and it is to the British military authorities in Egypt that belongs the credit of picking up again the discarded and discredited weapon of Arab co-operation. In contrast with the Government of India, they had plenty, and almost too much, imagination; and, above all, they displayed a fixity of purpose which was completely lacking in Indian counsels, which at the time were not only responsible for the direction of the Mesopotamian campaign, but were charged with the general supervision of Eastern affairs as far westward as Suez and ‘Aqaba. Egypt gradually encroached on the sphere of rival authority, and eventually established a dominance which was steadily reflected in the course of events during the next decade; those events suggest that, while India was generally right in its appreciation of the Arabian situation and lacked only the habit of action which had been petrified by decades of ponderous routine, the vigorous methods and enthusiastic originality of the Egyptian authorities were almost enough to carry a fantastic and utterly impossible experiment to the desired successful conclusion. Only one man, indeed, stood in the way of its complete and triumphant success, and the experts of Egypt went grievously astray in their estimate of Ibn Sa‘ud, who has routed their champions and completely wrecked the political structure of their confident dreams.

Be that as it may, it was the authorities in Egypt (Sir Henry Macmahon at Cairo and Sir Reginald Wingate at Khartum) who assumed responsibility for the direction of the activities of the Arabian theatre of war outside the actual sphere of the Mesopotamian operations; and the death of Shakespear practically put an end to any intimate concern of the Indian Government in events beyond the coast of the Gulf. The Red Sea and the Suez Canal had, of course, from the beginning of the war with Turkey been sources of grave anxiety to the British Commander, Sir J. Maxwell; the latter was threatened with attack, while the former, if neglected, could readily be sown with mines transported by way of the Hijaz Railway to ‘Aqaba and other points on the coast; and the responsibility for countering the possible moves of the enemy was so divided as to make effective action impossible, while the Turks, besides having the railway at their disposal, had four divisions scattered about the provinces of the Hijaz, ‘Asir and Yaman. In these circumstances it was decided early in 1915 that the Egyptian and Indian spheres of operation should be more clearly defined, and, while the Indian authorities were left for the time being to look after the Yaman and ‘Asir, Sir Henry Macmahon became definitely responsible for directing the mainly political operations in the Red Sea as far south as Jidda. The consequence was the inception of a long correspondence with Sharif Husain of Mecca, which ended in June 1916 with the raising of the standard of revolt by the Arabs of the Hijaz. This correspondence was destined to give rise to an acute controversy between the parties responsible for it in the course of the post-war settlement of the Arab world, and is of supreme historical importance, in that it contains the terms of the charter of Arab independence as agreed between the British Government representing the Allies and Sharif Husain representing the Arabs. As a matter of fact, it would seem that neither party was in a technical sense plenipotentiary, and it should not be forgotten that at the time of the actual correspondence it seemed exceedingly unlikely that the fulfilment of the terms agreed on would ever be practically feasible, in which case, of course, no claim could have been made. But there can be little doubt that the Sharif of Mecca understood, and the British Government allowed him to understand, that Arab independence, as laid down in the correspondence, should be the price of Arab co-operation in the war against the Turks in the event of the British Government being placed by final victory in a position to implement its undertakings. It was not therefore particularly creditable to the British Government that, before the ink was dry on the last letter sent to Sharif Husain, it was in active secret negotiation with the Governments of France and Russia for a partial partition of the Arab world among themselves, which was hopelessly inconsistent with the terms of the agreement with the Amir of Mecca. The Balfour declaration of November 1917 regarding Zionism was a further infringement of British promises to the Arabs, but this matter will be dealt with later, and for the moment it is only necessary to point out that, while the British Government regarded its agreement with the Arabs as a stumbling-block to be circumvented by all possible means as circumstances permitted, the Sharif of Mecca, having once satisfied himself that in the event of success the British would play fair, and having raised the standard of revolt against the Ottoman Empire, threw himself into the war with a zeal which cannot be denied by his most hostile critics.

In these circumstances it is necessary to examine as briefly as possible the actual implications of the Macmahon–Husain correspondence in order to form an idea of the commitments to which both parties put their seal. The first approach to the Sharif was actually made before the entry of the Turks into the war at the instance and on the initiative of Lord Kitchener, who had made the acquaintance of Husain's second son, 'Abdullah, at Cairo early in 1914. 'Abdullah replied vaguely, while making it quite clear that, in the event of the Turks joining Germany, his father and the Arabs would be willing to join Great Britain if it was made unmistakably worth their while to do so. When it became known that the Turks had actually thrown in their lot with the enemy, Lord Kitchener telegraphed to 'Abdullah offering, in return for Arab assistance in the war, a guarantee of active assistance against all foreign aggression and of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Arabia. He also hinted a pious hope that perchance, through this new alliance, the Califate might return to a scion of the Prophet's own family. Meanwhile, and naturally enough in the circumstances, ‘Abdullah was at Madina, sounding the Turks and corresponding with Ibn Sa‘ud to ascertain his probable attitude in the event of the Sharif sounding the call to a holy war against the enemies of the Calif-Sultan. Ibn Sa‘ud gave the proposal no encouragement, and communicated it to the British Government, which now redoubled its efforts to secure the adhesion of Arabia before it had committed itself to the Turks, who, under German instigation, were naturally doing all they could to achieve the declaration of a holy war in their favour at the religious centre of Islam.

At this stage Sir Reginald Wingate was playing a prominent part in the development of an Arab policy in the Sudan, where he had the benefit of the advice of Saiyid ‘Ali Marghani and other notable religious leaders; and it was perhaps owing to the pressure of the latter that the next stage was reached in the formulation of British policy. The British Government allowed it now to be generally known that, when it should come to discussing terms of peace, it would insist on the establishment of Arabia as an independent sovereign state, though for the time being it had not formulated, and was anxious to avoid formulating, any conception of the territorial extent of the country envisaged by its policy. Meanwhile matters were somewhat complicated by the conclusion, in April 1915, of a treaty between the Government of India and the Idrisi ruler of ‘Asir, by which the latter's independence and security from attack on his seaboard were guaranteed.

Nevertheless by July 1915 the stage was fully set for the serious business of negotiating the terms of an active intervention of the Arabs in the war; and for the first time the manœuvring diplomatists were brought to grips with the essentials of the problem by a clear-cut proposition emanating from Sharif Husain himself. It could be taken for granted that the Arabs were ready to revolt against their Ottoman overlord, and that they were not averse to throwing in their lot with the British, notoriously the leading Power of the world. But the terms of co-operation should be clearly understood from the beginning to avoid misunderstandings and disappointments in the future. Would the British Government agree to the following terms, which would satisfy the modest ambitions of the Arabs?—

(1) England should acknowledge the independence of the Arab countries within the following limits: North, a line running from Marsina through ‘Adana to the 37th parallel of latitude and following the latter to the Persian border; East, the Persian frontier down to the Shatt al ‘Arab and the coast of the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean; South, the Indian Ocean, but excluding Aden (to remain as it was); West, the Red Sea to ‘Aqaba and thence along the Sinai frontier of Egypt to the Mediterranean and up the coast of Palestine and Syria to Marsina.
(2) England should approve the assumption of the Califate by the Arabs.
(3) Arab Government to give England a general preference in the matter of concessions and economic enterprises.
(4) Mutual military assistance against any attack by a third party for a period of fifteen years.

(5) Each party to remain neutral in the event of the other being engaged in an aggressive conflict.
(6) Capitulations to be abolished.

Such were the terms proposed by the Sharif for preliminary consideration by the British authorities with a view to the continuance of the negotiations for the entry of the Arabs into the war on the side of the Allies. There was nothing ambiguous about his demands, even down to the minutest details of the territory of which he envisaged himself as the potential ruler; and he asked for a reply within a month, while reserving to himself complete freedom of action in the event of delay or of an unfavourable answer. In fact there was little in his terms to cause uneasiness in the absence of conflicting territorial ambitions: the proposal for an offensive and defensive allowance including the contingency of an aggressive war by either party, strange as it may sound to very modern ears, was not, in fact, so egregious at the time and presented no practical difficulty; and, as all the territory involved formed part of the Ottoman Empire, he was asking no substantial sacrifice on the part of the Allies. On the other hand, he was offering Great Britain a valuable economic privilege, and only demanding in return the abolition of the Capitulatory régime, whose doom was, in fact, already sealed, though it still survives in some regions in spite of the protests of the common sense of humanity.

The directness of the Sharif's approach to the problem offended the sense of decency of the British Foreign Office, which replied in the vaguest terms, though definitely declaring that the British Government would welcome the resumption of the Califate by a true descendant of the Prophet. The main point

—namely, the territory to be included in the future independent Arab state—was parried with a suggestion that it was surely premature to waste time in discussing such matters in the heat of war. But the Sharif, having received this letter of the end of August with "the utmost delight," was not prepared to stretch his confidence in the honour of Great Britain to unreasonable lengths, and, while disclaiming for himself any personal ambition in the matter, insisted that this question of boundaries should be disposed of first as a *sine qua non* of agreement; and he pointed out, with a considerable show of reason, that the limits claimed did, in fact, represent the extent of the territory inhabited by Arabs, in whose united name he spoke. It was quite clear that the Sharif's reply was intended as an ultimatum, and it was as such that it was treated by the responsible British authorities, who were well aware that the Germans were prepared to go much further than they themselves wished to in meeting the claims of the Young Arab party in Syria and elsewhere for a definite place in the sun. There was little time to lose, and if the Sharif's demands could not be conceded with a good grace, it was essential that they should be conceded in appearance, with as many safeguards as possible to provide loopholes of escape from their consequences when the day of reckoning came. Under the authority of the Foreign Office, therefore, Sir Henry Macmahon replied to the Sharif's letter on October 24th, 1915, in terms which may be briefly summarised as follows: "As you regard the question of frontiers as urgent, the British Government is prepared to give you assurances as follows—

"(1) The districts of Marsina and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the proposed limits and boundaries. Subject to the exclusion of this area and to the terms of our existing treaties with various Arab chiefs, the limits proposed by you are accepted, and with regard to such territories, in so far as the British Government can act without detriment to the French, I am authorised by His Majesty's Government to give you the following assurances.

"(2) Great Britain will recognise and support the independence of the Arabs within the territories proposed by the Sharif of Mecca subject to the above modifications; and Great Britain will guarantee the Holy Places against all external aggression.

"(3) Whenever possible Great Britain will advise the Arabs in respect of the establishment of the most suitable forms of government in the various parts of the above territories.

"(4) It is understood that the Arabs will seek the advice of Great Britain, and that such European advisers as may be required will be only British.

"(5) As regards the Wilayats of Baghdad and Basra, it will be recognised by the Arabs that special measures of British control are necessary to guard against foreign aggression and to cater for the interests of the local populations."

Sir Henry Macmahon's letter was skilfully contrived to meet the essential needs of the Arabs without sacrificing any existent British interests, while

French interests, which were still in embryo, as the country covered by them was still in the hands of the enemy, were temporarily protected by a screen of rather vague verbiage, the meaning of which has never been properly cleared up, if indeed it was ever intended to have any definite meaning. But the actual despatch of such a letter necessitated the immediate taking of the French into the confidence of British counsels; and it seems that, when invited to consultation, the French representatives were not a little horrified to find that their Ally had gone so far as to make consultation at this stage a farce. They claimed, nevertheless, that the whole of Syria and Palestine and also the Mosul district should be allotted to France, on the ground of her long moral and intellectual contact with those areas. And their claims actually formed the starting point of secret negotiations (to which Russia as an interested party was admitted), which ran parallel with the already far-advanced negotiations with the Sharif, and ultimately culminated in what is generally known as the Sykes–Picot agreement. The scope of these negotiations scarcely embraces Arabia proper, except in so far as it excludes it from all concern with the territory dealt with therein, though part of this territory already formed part of the area in respect of which the British Government had committed itself to the Sharif. The details, therefore, do not concern us here, but it is of interest to note in passing that the conference referred to resulted in a decision to exclude Palestine from the area affected by French claims (and of course from the area conceded to the Sharif) for further consideration. The Government of India was not more pleased than the French at the terms of Sir Henry Macmahon's letter to the Sharif, but its objections to the commitments made in respect of Mesopotamia appear almost too childish and inept to merit serious consideration under the microscope of history. On the eve of Ctesiphon and the long series of military disasters leading up to the fall of Kut, the Government of India wailed at the prospect of "giving up the main fruits of our hard-won victories in Mesopotamia" and of the loss of enormous potential revenues. It objected in principle to the creation of a strong Arab government or state on the flank of the Persian Gulf; and it stated without a blush that "the minimum of annexation contemplated by us has always been the Wilayats of Basra and Baghdad." The objections of India were rightly enough brushed aside with scant official courtesy, and the negotiations proceeded with Sharif Husain, who received the historic letter at Mecca on November 2nd, and despatched his reply thereto on November 5th.

The exclusion of the provinces of 'Adana and Marsina from the prospective Arab kingdom was accepted by him with a good grace and without argument. But it was different with the provinces of Aleppo and Bairut, whose population he declared to be entirely Arab, as no distinction should or would be made between Muslims and Christians; he could not therefore agree to the exclusion of these areas from the scope of the agreement. And with regard to the reservations made in respect of the provinces of Basra and Baghdad, the utmost he could agree to was that the area actually in British occupation at the time (roughly the Wilayat of Basra) should be temporarily and without prejudice administered by the British after the war, in return for an indemnity to be paid in cash to enable the new territories to organise their governments. It was for various reasons not till December 13th that Sir Henry Macmahon was able to despatch his reply to this letter, which had caused somewhat of a flutter in Whitehall owing to known French susceptibilities, though British military preoccupations in Gallipoli and Salonica made it impossible for the moment to contemplate launching the Arab campaign on a proper basis, and therefore made the gaining of time more important than the actual clinching of negotiations. A present of £20,000 therefore accompanied the letter, as an earnest of honourable intentions, and perhaps owing to the hint of cash in the Sharif's own communication. But the letter itself merely temporised with the problem under discussion, and the Sharif was advised to take his time about organising the projected revolt, as it was essential that no move should be made until he was ready to press it with men and material to a successful conclusion; at the same time the British Government pleaded that more time was needed by itself to examine the proposals of the Sharif in respect of the Aleppo and Bairut provinces, in whose fate its Ally, France, was interested, and of Baghdad, where the existence of a stable government would be necessary to assure the stability and security of any régime introduced further south.

Replying at the beginning of January 1916, the Sharif indicated his acceptance of the British attitude in respect of Mesopotamia, while leaving entirely to the honour and discretion of Great Britain the assessment of the amount of monetary compensation which such a concession merited, and assuming that the British occupation of the country would be only temporary, however long it might in fact last. He shrewdly suspected that the satisfaction of British ambitions in this direction would go far to console the British Government for any disappointment that his attitude towards French aspirations in Syria might involve; and on this point he maintained his previous attitude, explaining that the concessions already made by him in respect of Marsina and ʻAdana were the utmost that could reasonably be expected from the Arabs. This attitude was, however, qualified in a somewhat curious manner by a statement that after the war he would demand of Great Britain what he was now prepared to leave for the time being to France in Bairut and its coasts, which incidentally were securely in Turkish occupation. He ended by intimating that, while he was willing to be patient in the matter of the operations which he would be expected to put in hand, those operations would obviously necessitate the supply of arms and other material by the British authorities. This letter was regarded as eminently satisfactory by the British Government, in spite of its presage of future trouble with France; but Sir Henry Macmahon's reply skated lightly over this aspect of the matter, and was couched in such terms as to suggest that complete agreement had at last been achieved between the negotiating parties. This view was reciprocated in the Sharif's answer, written about the middle of February, in which he announced that his sons Faisal and ʻAli were respectively at Damascus and Madina, watching the situation and awaiting a favourable moment for actual revolt in co-operation with Arab elements in the Turkish army. Meanwhile his son ʻAbdullah was intriguing at Mecca to arrange the proclamation of his father as Calif, and all that was now necessary was that Husain should be supplied immediately with a sum of £50,000 to finance the beginnings of his venture, and that supplies of arms, ammunition and food should be collected at Port Sudan in readiness for the psychological moment.

At this point, therefore, there was a definite agreement between the Sharif and the British authorities that, when circumstances should be propitious, the former should rise against the Turks in the Hijaz, and would then be supported in his operations by his British allies. The price of such assistance by the Sharif to the British cause was more or less agreed in detail, and it was understood that it should be paid when success made payment possible. And at this stage an Arab Bureau was formed as a special war secretariat of the High Commissioner in Egypt to co-ordinate all operations and propaganda relating to the new-born movement of the Arabs; though its executive functions did not extend to Mesopotamia, where the British Chief Political Officer still worked under the Government of India. Nevertheless it was this Bureau which till the end of the war directed the Arab policy of the British Government, and whose influence made itself overwhelmingly felt in the various Middle East Departments in Whitehall, which inherited its functions during the post-war settlement of Arabian problems. That the Arab Bureau did admirable work cannot for a moment be questioned, but it is equally certain that its general judgment of the permanent factors in the Arabian situation was sadly at fault, owing largely to its fanatical adherence to an ideal of a mystical rather than a practical character. It would be hard to exaggerate the invisible influence of the Calif complex on the counsels of Britain at this time, when king-making had almost become the sport of the vulgar. But Britain did not realise that the Califate was but a natural appanage of the strongest Muslim Power of the day, and not in itself a source of strength and inspiration. It was, indeed, no more than a robe of honour, which the centuries had worn threadbare and which was ultimately discarded by Turkey for Homburg hats and trousers, with every appearance of substantial benefit from the change; the next monarch to wear it, the same Sharif Husain whom we had so zealously encouraged to aspire to it, collapsed incontinently amid the derision of Islam. Time may yet restore the prestige of a post so honourable in Islamic annals, but it must first establish the effective precedence of the various Muhammadan Powers. And those who in 1915 coined the ideal of the restoration of the Califate to an Arab of pure race may yet find their dream realised; that would have happened long since if they had recognised the only effective candidate in the man to whose discouragement they devoted the whole weight of their energy and ability—in vain.

Be that as it may, the Arab Bureau now assumed the direction of the Arab revolt, and its first task was to draft a letter expressing approval and acceptance of the Sharif's proposals and requisitions. At the same time he was warned that the increased activity of the enemy along the Red Sea coast might necessitate the bombardment of certain positions, a contingency which he was asked not to misunderstand. Accordingly the ports of Wajh and Umm Lajj were bombarded from the sea on March 21st; but the Germans redoubled their efforts to secure the Hijaz by propaganda and more practical means, including the establishment of wireless stations in the Yaman to link up East Africa with Constantinople and Berlin. Some of their earlier efforts at penetration of the Hijaz had gone awry at the hands of the turbulent Harb tribesmen, who had accounted for a considerable number of wandering German emissaries; but a fresh mission under Von Stotzingen, which left Berlin in March 1916, was designed on a more ambitious scale, and actually arrived as far as Yanbu' at the end of May. The British arrangements with Sharif Husain had therefore matured only just in time, and, considering the long period covered by the negotiations and preliminary preparations, the complete secrecy with which they were carried out deserves the unqualified admiration of history. It was indeed a stupendous achievement to entice the emissaries of the usually well-informed German General Staff into the heart of the Hijaz within a few days of the outbreak of a revolt which meant the final and effective exclusion of that province from the further calculations of the enemy and his isolation from his armies in the Yaman. The Stotzinger mission made good its escape with some casualties at the hands of the local Arabs and with the loss of some papers of considerable importance.

Meantime the Sharif had pressingly asked for a blockade of the Hijaz and ‘Asir coasts, in order to encourage the merchant element of the population, which was generally content with the Turkish régime, to veer round to his side. And the first consignment of military stores was shipped to Port Sudan early in May. On June 9th the revolt of the Arabs began with the shelling of the Turkish positions at Jidda by His Majesty's ships *Hardinge* and *Fox*. The general impression created by the rising on the Islamic world was by no means favourable and nowhere enthusiastic. But the revolt was in active being. The bulk of the Turkish garrison was summering at Taif, whither Sharif ‘Abdullah had been sent to organise the rising of the Arab tribes and to mask the revolt at Mecca, which took place simultaneously with the bombardment of Jidda. The Turks shelled the Great Mosque at Mecca and did some damage to the Ka‘ba itself, but the city was soon in the hands of the rebels, and the Turkish garrison surrendered. The Arab forces under Sharif Muhsin, who was accompanied by Husain's youngest son Zaid, launched out on the road to Jidda, capturing the fort of Bahra half-way without difficulty, and soon appeared outside the Turkish entrenchments, which were being bombarded from the sea. Within a few days the Turks decided to surrender, and soon afterwards the whole force of forty-five officers and 1400 men was duly taken off into captivity by the British ships. Jidda thus came under the government of the Sharif, who issued at Mecca a proclamation declaring the independence of the Arabs. Taif itself held out for some months, and Ghalib Pasha only surrendered to ‘Abdullah in September after the town and barracks had suffered considerably from the guns of the besiegers. At Madina the rising was entirely abortive, and the brothers ‘Ali and Faisal, who were in charge of it, withdrew towards Rabigh, where Shaikh Husain ibn Mubairik had decamped to join the Turks with much of the military stores entrusted to his care. The first success of the revolt was followed by a moment of indecision almost amounting to panic, and there was a serious danger of the Turks, now recovered from their initial surprise, taking vigorous action to restore the situation before full advantage could be taken of the collapse of their régime in southern Hijaz. At this stage there appeared on the scene a young Englishman, temporarily labelled as a second-lieutenant, who was destined to make history and romance by directing the feckless movements of our new Arab allies into fruitful military channels. "Colonel" T. E. Lawrence arrived at Jidda in the train of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary to the High Commissioner in Egypt, in October for a general discussion of the situation with the second son of the Sharif, ‘Abdullah, who came down from Mecca for the purpose. ‘Abdullah, conscious of the presence of his exacting father at the other end of the telephone line, represented the situation as being exceedingly grave, and asked that a British brigade should be held in readiness to be landed at Rabigh in the event of a vigorous push by the Turks in the direction of Mecca. The Turkish attack on the Suez Canal had been definitely defeated in August, and all serious menace in that quarter had vanished; but the British military authorities had no desire to engage its human resources in a very subsidiary and problematic field of operations. 'Abdullah's prayers were met with vague promises, but Lawrence's demands were met in full. All he wanted was permission to visit the discomfited Faisal and study his situation. A few days later he disembarked at Rabigh, the headquarters of 'Ali, the Sharif's eldest son. Yet a few days and he was in Faisal's presence at Hamra in Wadi Safra, with the inner conviction that in him he had found "the leader who would bring the Arab Revolt to full glory."

The defence of Rabigh made way for a bolder plan of far-flung attacks on the scattered Turkish positions from Madina northward to Syria and on the Hijaz Railway. Lawrence went to Egypt, and, having secured the ready assent of the authorities to his proposals and their promise to supply the necessary technical and other officers to help Faisal, returned to Yanbu' just in time to meet his champion returning crestfallen to his base after a crushing defeat at the hands of the Turks who had circumvented, surprised and fallen upon his positions in Wadi Safra. A second defeat in his new position at Nakhl Mubarak made the situation almost hopeless, but the British navy here intervened, and the show it made in the little harbour of Yanbu' deterred the Turks from an attack which might well have been final. Lawrence himself afterwards dated the Turkish defeat back to that day, when, losing the initiative, they fell back to hold Madina while he and Faisal harried the countryside.

The coast now being securely in Arab hands as far north as Yanbu', Faisal's army moved out northward on January 3rd, 1917, to the capture of Wajh, which was duly achieved with the active co-operation of the navy under Captain W. E. D. Boyle. Lawrence now launched out into a wild orgy of train-wrecking and dynamiting with a chosen gang of the toughest ruffians in Faisal's camp. The Arab army remained stationary or engaged in the mildest and most desultory form of warfare, waiting on Lawrence's progress in the north. 'Ali and 'Abdullah were nominally engaged in the siege of Madina, while Faisal remained at Wajh and Yanbu' until he should be summoned elsewhere. The summons came in August, when Lawrence, after a brilliant march from somewhere in the midst of "the veritable desert," descended suddenly on 'Aqaba and almost without firing a shot received the surrender of the astonished Turkish garrison, which had expected nothing less than an attack on their position from the landward. Faisal now made his base at 'Aqaba, and some severe fighting took place at Abal Lisan, at the head of the pass leading up to the Arabian plateau. Ma'an and its strong garrison maintained a stand against the desultory operations of the Arabs until late into the following year, but Lawrence side-tracked this position, and the flood of war swept ever northward through Shaubak to Tafila, where a brilliant victory in the open practically completed the wresting of the Hijaz in its entirety from the Turks, who had ruled it for centuries. Madina and Ma'an alone remained to them, and in both places their garrisons held out till the bitter end, Madina indeed being resolutely defended by Fakhri Pasha until, in January

1919, he received orders from Constantinople to deliver the city of the Prophet over to the Prophet's descendants. For all practical purposes pertaining to the Arabia of our story Lawrence's campaign ended with the completion of the conquest of the Hijaz in the autumn of 1917, when Faisal's army became a part of the forces at the disposal of General Allenby for the final advance into Syria and the crumpling up of the Turkish defences. Within twelve months of his arrival at Jidda he had converted an apparently cheerless, if not hopeless, situation into a promising offensive of definite military value; and, though it cannot be claimed that the operations in the Hijaz or those that followed in Trans-Jordan and Syria were of great primary importance in the general scheme of the World War, their secondary value can scarcely be denied, and they must be given a very high place among the achievements of all the many subsidiary theatres of the war. That they were achieved by a civilian innocent of all military training, with troops which without prejudice may be described as useless for all serious purposes, is a fact which only enhances the credit of Lawrence and of those who, in the midst of other perplexities, had sufficient imagination to let him do as he would so he did not ask them for men.

We must now turn back to other parts of Arabia, where the progress of the Hijaz operations, financed by Great Britain on a scale to make water the mouths of all Arabs, was watched with a somewhat jealous interest, in view of its probable effects in the future. This attitude, natural enough in the circumstances, was exacerbated by the assumption of the style and title of "King of the Arab Countries" by the ambitious Husain, and, to a lesser extent, by the formal recognition of his "Kingdom of the Hijaz" by Great Britain and others of the Allies. His pretensions were, of course, entirely ignored by Ibn Rashid, who during the course of 1917 joined the Turks at Madain Salih and remained there until the summer of the following year, the Turks being unwilling to leave him to his own devices in Central Arabia lest he should fall to the temptations placed in his way by the ever-active British, as Husain himself had done. But the attitude of Ibn Sa'ud to Husain's pretensions was from the British point of view of greater importance, both immediate and ultimate, while Husain himself realised that the Arab Empire he contemplated ruling in view of the British promises to himself could be nothing but partial without the adherence of Ibn Sa'ud. He therefore viewed with considerable uneasiness the friendly relations subsisting between the Wahhabi ruler and the British authorities in Mesopotamia, whom he would have had bringing pressure on Ibn Sa'ud to acknowledge his own suzerainty and supremacy. In fact the Chief Political Officer had done what was practically possible to secure a benevolent attitude towards the Sharifian revolt on the part of the Wahhabi ruler and other chiefs of the Gulf coast. This attitude was voiced at his instance at a conference held at Kuwait in the early winter of 1916; but the most optimistic supporters of King Husain, as he now became, must have realised that the friendly sentiments expressed by Ibn Sa'ud were subject to contingent reservations, none the less real for being suppressed out of regard for the common Ally. On the other hand, the Arab Bureau was exceedingly anxious to secure greater cordiality between its own nominee for the throne of the future empire and the one rival who stood in his way; and the occurrence of petty incidents productive of irritation and friction resulted in the despatch of Mr. Ronald Storrs from Egypt to discuss matters with Sir Percy Cox in Mesopotamia. It was agreed that the best plan would be to send Storrs into Arabia to discuss matters personally with Ibn Sa‘ud; and this plan was actually put into operation. Its results might well have been far-reaching, for Storrs, with his deep knowledge of the other side of the case, might conceivably have found a solution for the problem in actual contact with the Wahhabi ruler, while any agreed solution would possibly have commanded acceptance by the Sharif. It was, however, not to be. Storrs became a victim of sunstroke at the very inception of his journey, and his enterprise had to be abandoned. It had, however, one good result, in that the decision to resume contact with Ibn Sa‘ud after so long a period of isolation following upon Shakespear's death was maintained in spite of the withdrawal of the most suitable emissary. Meanwhile a whole crop of minor problems had begun to appear in the desert; the blockade was being circumvented in the east; the presence of Ibn Rashid in the north was always a possible source of serious trouble, and the Turks were reported to be increasing his resources in arms and ammunition; and, finally, the situation on the Hijaz frontier, though still undisturbed by any palpable incident, was far from reassuring. The British authorities in Mesopotamia and Egypt agreed that it was time to resume the project of consultation with Ibn Sa‘ud by sending a joint mission to Riyadh to seek out a settlement satisfactory to all parties. Sir Percy Cox's representatives duly left Baghdad towards the end of October 1917, and arrived at Riyadh at the end of November, only to learn that King Husain had raised strong objections to the sending of any such mission, and had refused to allow the Egyptian section to proceed from the Hijaz. The *impasse* was complete, and it was recognised that there could now be no mediation between our two chief Arab Allies. That position was accepted philosophically enough by the British Government, and the function of the Mesopotamian section of the abortive mission, which remained in Arabia till the end of the Great War, became one of diplomatic representation at the Wahhabi court. Questions arising out of the blockade operations, concentrated for the most part at Kuwait, became ever more delicate in proportion to the growth of Shaikh Salim's hostility towards Ibn Sa'ud. Moreover Salim, to annoy the Wahhabi ruler, lost no opportunity of proclaiming an allegiance to King Husain, which he was far from acknowledging in his heart of hearts, while he busied himself intriguing with and encouraging the 'Ajman tribe of the Hasa province to maintain the attitude of hostility which in 1916 had moved Ibn Sa'ud to send against them a strong military expedition, in the course of which his favourite brother Sa'd had lost his life. These matters kept the mission busy with explanations and counter-explanations; but its main function was perhaps to encourage Ibn Sa'ud to resume the hostilities against Ibn Rashid, which had been in abeyance since the battle of Jarrab. Its success was in proportion to its want of funds—the lavish financial assistance accorded to King Husain by the British had set a standard to which the resources of Baghdad were quite unequal—and the development of definitely hostile feelings on the part of King Husain towards Ibn Sa'ud during the spring and summer of 1918 further retarded the inception of the campaign against the common enemy. Indeed Ibn Sa'ud very frankly represented that he could scarcely court active hostilities with an enemy who was not at the moment a serious menace to himself, while the British allowed their allies, Husain in the Hijaz and Salim at Kuwait, to make trouble for him on his more vulnerable frontiers. Nevertheless he agreed to undertake a campaign against Hail, on the understanding that the British would restrain their other Arab allies from any action calculated to affect his position adversely.

Preparations for the campaign were proceeding smoothly, though very slowly, when, in June 1918, news arrived at Riyadh that a Sharifian force had attacked the oasis of Khurma on the Hijaz–Najd frontier, whose Wahhabi inhabitants *de facto* recognised the overlordship of Ibn Sa'ud and had, in fact, defeated the attack with considerable losses of men and guns. A month or so later the Sharifian forces repeated the attack, to suffer a second defeat; but the fear of the resumption of the attempt with larger forces had resulted in a strong appeal by the villagers to Ibn Sa'ud for assistance, and the Wahhabi ruler had represented that he would be compelled to send his forces to the defence of his western frontier instead of attacking Hail unless the British Government undertook to keep King Husain in order. The British authorities, mainly concerned to prevent the outbreak of local hostilities which might prejudice the course of Lawrence's operations on the Syrian frontier, gave the necessary undertaking, and promised its good offices to arbitrate on the disputed frontier after the conclusion of the war. Satisfied with this guarantee, Ibn Sa'ud moved up to the Qasim, and in September launched his long-promised attack on Hail, whither Ibn Rashid had returned from Madain Salih. A battle of typical Badawin character was fought at Yatab, in the near neighbourhood of the Shammar capital, and the Wahhabi forces achieved a complete victory, with much booty; but Ibn Rashid himself was secure in the practically impregnable fortress of Mu'aiwij Baqa'a, and the armament of Hail rendered any direct assault on its walls out of the question. A council of war decided that a siege was undesirable, and the Wahhabi army, after the division of the spoil, was temporarily demobilised, on the understanding that it should reassemble within a month or two for the continuance of the campaign. Meanwhile news came in that a third attack had been made by the Sharifian forces on Khurma, which had again been defeated by the villagers with the help of certain Badawin reinforcements. This time Ibn Sa'ud gave a definite assurance to the Khurma people that he would himself protect them with all his resources against any repetition of Sharifian aggression; but his vigorous protests to the British mission against the failure of the British authorities in Egypt to restrain the Sharif were drowned by the chorus of thanksgiving which acclaimed the termination of the Great War. The British mission left Arabia, which now loomed but small beside the many problems awaiting the attention of the victorious leaders; and during the period of the Peace Conference Arabia connoted in Europe nothing but the homeland of Faisal, who represented his father at Paris, and the scene of the astonishing exploits of Lawrence. The real Arabia behind the desert frontier was almost unknown even in Whitehall, and the settlement of its problems was in the hands of Lawrence, who was too busy for anything but the interests of Faisal and the hopeless task of enforcing observance by the Allies of the conditions to which Great Britain had set her seal as the price of Arab co-operation payable in the hour of victory. In the event, after much shuffling and reshuffling of the cards, the great Arab kingdom or empire of Husain's dreams was shorn of the whole of Mesopotamia, the whole of Syria with the districts of Trans-Jordan, and the whole of Palestine, in respect of which the necessity of securing the financial goodwill and assistance of the Jews—and particularly those of America—at a critical period of the war had forced the British Government to make the declaration of November 1917 which is historically associated with the name of Mr. Balfour. These unconsidered trifles, the fruits of the hard-won victory over the Turks, were suitably divided out between Great Britain and France, and the mortified protests of King Husain passed unheeded. The partition of the new territories was made under the convenient disguise of mandates, but the effective dominance of the so-called mandatories was not minimised by the use of the strange euphemism. The arrangement, as was only to be expected, has produced its inevitable crop of troubles both for the British and for the French; but time has somewhat tempered the first bitterness of the disappointment which made itself felt throughout the Arab world when it was known that Great Britain was unable or unwilling to fulfil her promises. And the vast provinces coveted by Sharif Husain during the negotiations of 1915 and 1916 still form, in fact though not in name, part of the effective dominions of the two great Powers who negotiated secretly between themselves for an arrangement which should stand, while one of them negotiated with the Sharif an understanding which was only intended to serve a particular purpose.

The operations of the Great War in the neighbourhood of Aden scarcely fall to be considered in connection with the history of Arabia; and it will perhaps be sufficient merely to mention the fact that throughout the whole period of the war the Turks maintained in this distant corner of their Empire a struggle which could scarcely be expected to weaken the British position at Aden itself, but which caused much annoyance to the military and political authorities at that place. Incidentally it actually produced a unique position, in that the Turkish occupation of a considerable part of the Aden Protectorate constituted perhaps the sole instance throughout the war of enemy occupation of British territory. Its results survived for a decade after the Armistice in the continued occupation of the same area by Imam Yahya, until in 1928 he was compelled by the aerial bombardment of his own towns to withdraw behind the frontier agreed upon between the British and Turkish commissioners in 1905. Further east along the shores of the Indian Ocean the war provided an opportunity for peaceful British penetration of the Hadhramaut province; and the British hold on Masqat, Bahrain and Kuwait was also strengthened during the same period by military or political demonstrations. On the Red Sea coast the surrender and departure of the Turkish troops left Imam Yahya sovereign of an independent domain, the reward of fidelity to a losing cause which he had so often challenged in the heyday of its sovereign power; but his effective sovereignty was limited to the interior, with the port of Mukha as an outlet. The more important town and harbour of Hudaida, temporarily occupied by British troops during the evacuation of the surrendered Turks, was somewhat gratuitously handed over to the Idrisi in reward for a friendship which had borne no substantial fruits. It never seemed likely that he would hold the place with his own resources, and it was, in fact, occupied in 1921 without the slightest difficulty by the troops of Imam Yahya, who pushed his boundary up northwards along the coast to include Luhaiya and Maidi. Meanwhile in 1919 a somewhat half-hearted British attempt to enter into negotiations with the Imam was abruptly terminated by the ignominious detention of the British mission under Colonel H. F. Jacob at Bajil, a day's journey out from Hudaida, by the Quhra tribesmen, and its subsequent return to the coast with nothing achieved.

The main effect of the Great War and the victory of the Allies on Arabia was the definitive severance of the ties of more or less vague dependence which had long merged its fortunes in those of the Ottoman Empire. On the coasts the British position had been substantially strengthened and made more effectively exclusive than before; in the Yaman a mediatised status, already in operation to the mutual advantage of the Imam and the Turks, had been converted into full Arab sovereignty; the province of 'Asir had attained independence with nothing to justify or preserve it, and it proved to be but temporary, as will be seen. The rest of Arabia stood divided into three camps, with the ultimate winner badly placed at the start. The old Turkish province of the Hijaz had blossomed out into a kingdom formally recognised by the world's Powers, and admitted to the Peace Conference to become an original member of the League of Nations, though its membership never became effective, owing to the refusal of King Husain to ratify the Covenant in token of his acceptance of the mandatory arrangements made for the convenience and advantage of his former Allies in defiance of their undertakings towards the Arabs. His disappointment was to some extent softened by the proclamation of Faisal as King of Syria at Damascus in March 1920, and the simultaneous abortive proclamation of 'Abdullah as King of 'Iraq; but these efforts to stem the tide of imperialism were vain delusions, and the collapse of Faisal as the result of an imprudent challenge of the admittedly unreasonable demands of the French in July of the same year finally put the seal on the *fait accompli* of the mandatory partition of the Arab borderlands. Unfortunately, Husain, dignified as was his attitude of protest against the actions of the Allies, did nothing to create confidence in himself among those who anxiously watched his growingly reckless administration of the Hijaz, which was unreservedly his to make or mar; and unwisely he sought to vent his pent-up wrath on his own Arabian neighbours. Far from showing any capacity to rule an empire, the leader of the Arab revolt soon became notorious as a cause of dissension in Arabia itself and a stirrer-up of strife in the lands which his old Allies held in the sacred name of humanity and civilisation.

Of his two neighbours in Central Arabia, Ibn Rashid, like the Imam Yahya, had reaped profit from his unswerving loyalty to the vanquished Turks, and had emerged as an independent sovereign enjoying a considerable meed of sympathy in the counsels of Great Britain, which were partly actuated by the old passion for a balance of power in areas liable to affect British interests, and partly, even largely, influenced by the personal predilections of certain British officials (Gertrude Bell, Colonel Leachman and others) in favour of the maintenance of the bloody but picturesque dynasty of Hail as a makeweight to the dour Wahhabism of Najd. With the armament placed at his disposal by the Turks, Ibn Rashid was in by no means a bad position relatively to that of his southern rival; and, moreover, he had the full sympathy of King Husain in the struggle that was now inevitable, to say nothing of more substantial assistance in the matter of money and arms, which were freely provided in return for the merest lip-service as of vassal to suzerain. Alone of the Arabian powers, Ibn Sa‘ud emerged from the war with nothing to show for the opportunities that had come his way. Territorially he stood within the frontiers that divided him from his neighbours on the first day of the Great War. The Turks, it is true, had disappeared from the scene, to trouble him no more; but in their place stood a number of Arabian chiefs, whose hostility towards himself had been declared in the most unmistakable fashion, and who all, in greater or less degree, enjoyed the sympathy and support of the Power, whose friendship he himself had sought eagerly for years before the War. The arch-enemy was, of course, King Husain, with Shaikh Salim of Kuwait next in order for the virulence of his enmity; the Muntafiq influence had vanished into thin air, though the borderlands were distantly unfriendly, if not actively hostile; but the crux of the Arabian situation lay without question in the rivalry of Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rashid. That was an old story, but the time had now arrived for a final settlement of accounts, and the ruler of Najd had profited by the period of the War to develop his scheme of Ikhwan colonies, which, now perhaps a dozen, stood forth as a bulwark of the faith against the world. The blossoming of Arabia had been for the benefit of others than the Wahhabi state, which had now for two centuries been the central figure on the stage. And in the judgment of many it was doubtful whether the Wahhabi system could survive, much less flourish, under the changed conditions of the modern world; but they calculated for the most part in ignorance of the basic facts of the situation in Central Arabia, where a man had arisen capable of guiding to complete fruition the withered plant of puritan fanaticism, revived by himself and tended by him through the long period of consolidation until it grew into a vigorous sapling. It was at this point that a head less wise might have been tempted to exhaust its strength under the apparently favourable conditions created by the War; but, to change the metaphor, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn Sa‘ud saw that the withered limbs of the Wahhabi colt, atrophied by long absence from the race-course, needed much nourishment yet before it should be ready for the great race. So far as Najd was concerned, expansion had been inward rather than outward, a moral and spiritual expansion rather than material; and the Wahhabi state was yet fresh and strong and vigorous to meet the rivals who had already almost shot their bolt. The triumph of the Wahhabis was, to be sure, rapid and final.

Act IV. Triumph

During the opening months of 1919 the British Government and its victorious allies were far too busy with their own problems in Europe and elsewhere to concern themselves with the development of the Arabian situation. It is true that the Sharif Faisal, as the representative of his father, the King of the Hijaz, was actively engaged in pressing what were generally regarded as Arab claims to a share of the war-booty in London and Paris, where he was in close touch with the leaders of European opinion; while an enterprising American showman, Mr. Lowell Thomas, was soon to launch a campaign for the enlightenment of the British public regarding the war exploits in the Arabian theatre of the now famous Colonel T. E. Lawrence. Yet the people who admired the impish Englishman on the films of Covent Garden and gazed with awe at the romantic figure of Faisal scarcely realised that the real Arabia was far beyond the orbit of their activities, which centred, in fact, round their joint efforts to secure for the King's son a throne in Syria destined to be the death-knell of the father's hopes of an Arabian Empire. While the son was laying the foundations of what was to be a temporary throne, in complete disregard of his father's opposition, the latter was taking time by the forelock to precipitate an issue which would in effect decide the fate of both so far as the real Arabian arena was concerned. He rightly saw that Arabia must be united to make any effective headway against European imperialism in its borderlands, but he altogether failed to realise his own limitations as a claimant to Arabian hegemony. And he entirely miscalculated his own personal importance to the world in general under the new conditions created by a victory in which he had played a small though notable part. As a matter of fact, he had begun to be somewhat of a thorn in the side of his British allies as far back as the autumn of 1917, when, after the capture of 'Aqaba and the consequent practical completion of the conquest of the Hijaz, Faisal had, under the inspiration and influence of Lawrence, rebelled against paternal control from a distance and placed himself as an army commander under the supreme control of General Allenby for the rest of the campaign. Husain had bowed to the inevitable ungracefully enough, and had from that moment pursued his own ambitions, much to the embarrassment of his allies within the limits of Arabia. The beginnings of his offensive against Ibn Sa'ud have already been mentioned, and it was its resumption which once more focussed the attention of Whitehall on the affairs of Arabia.

In March 1919 it was reported that the situation had become so acute that the outbreak of hostilities between King Husain and Ibn Sa'ud might be expected at any moment if nothing was done to arrange an accommodation between them. Both parties were still counted among our Allies, and both were, in fact, in receipt of subsidies from the British Government. An open breach between them would have had an unfortunate repercussion on Muslim opinion in general, which was anxiously watching to see how the triumphant Christian nations would deal with the beaten Turk. Husain, our nominee and chief Arab ally, was in many quarters regarded as a traitor to the cause of Islam; and his defeat by the Wahhabis would have been hailed as a just retribution for his sins. At the same time the British Government was freely suspected of arming and financing both parties for a civil war which would enable it to profit by the retention of Syria and Mesopotamia, to both of which the Arabs retained their claims on the strength of the promises made by Sir Henry Macmahon. And, finally, the British Government had more or less pledged itself to adjudicate on the claims of the contending parties as soon as it should be at leisure to consider the matter on its merits in the atmosphere of peace. It was therefore in a somewhat delicate position, which was made no easier by the fact that two newly-formed "Middle East" departments in the Foreign and India Offices respectively maintained rival views as to what should be done, and received the full support of their respective chiefs, Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu. The only point on which the two departments were in full agreement was that something should be done.

It was accordingly decided that an interdepartmental meeting should be convened to discuss the immediate future of British policy in Arabia. Lord Curzon presided over the conference which took place about the middle of March, and was attended by representatives of all Ministries likely to be affected as well as by a bevy of so-called experts. On the merits of the dispute between Ibn Sa‘ud and Husain there could scarcely be agreement, and the discussion, admirably directed by Lord Curzon, turned on the more practical aspect of the requirements of British policy and of the probable result of an actual clash between the two parties. It was essential to make sure of the latter before committing ourselves to any definite line of action, and, fortunately, the representatives of the War Office had made a special study of the purely military aspect of the problem, and had formed a perfectly definite opinion that in the event of armed conflict between the two parties the immensely superior armament and the long war-training of the Sharifian forces left no reasonable doubt of a decisive Sharifian victory. The Wahhabi rabble, militant and aggressive as it was, could not be taken seriously, and the *advocatus diaboli* was good-humouredly laughed out of the conference. Mr. Montagu yielded to the iron logic of the military appreciation of the situation, and Lord Curzon, relieved of all anxiety on this score, went rejoicing on his way. "Our policy," he declared, "is a Husain policy, and Husain must receive our support so long as such support is not likely to involve us in any military adventure in the deserts of Arabia. On that point we have the explicit assurance of our military advisers." There was no difficulty in deciding upon the details of the action to be taken, as the immediate issue was perfectly clear-cut. The Sharif claimed the oasis of Khurma on the Hijaz–Najd frontier, and Ibn Sa'ud actually held it; thrice in 1918 the Sharif had tried to take it by force, and thrice the villagers and Badawin had thrown back his soldiers in confusion; he now proposed once more to attempt the old task, but in doing so he sought the moral support of the British Government, which, as he thought, would deter Ibn Sa'ud from keeping his promise to go to the assistance of the oasis if it was again threatened. The moral support of the British Government was now given with both hands. The oasis of Khurma was adjudicated to the kingdom of the Hijaz, and King Husain was authorised to occupy it with the blessing of Great Britain. Ibn Sa'ud was informed of this decision through the Civil Commissioner at Baghdad, and was further warned to refrain from challenging the British award, on pain of incurring the grave displeasure of His Majesty's Government and the immediate loss of his monthly subsidy of £5000. The momentous conference, having completed its task, dispersed; and two months later it was hurriedly reassembled to consider the result of its decision. Lord Curzon again presided, but the War Office had discreetly changed its representative.

King Husain, overjoyed at the British Government's adjudication of the Khurma dispute in his favour, had lost no time in preparing a strong expeditionary force for the conquest of the little oasis. Besides the usual appanage of Badawin auxiliaries, the force numbered some 4000 men of the regular army, under Turkish-trained officers of Syrian and 'Iraqian nationality, and it was well provided with artillery and machine guns and other paraphernalia of war. Its commander was the King's second son, 'Abdullah, who had had the honour of receiving the sword of the Turkish commandant, Ghalib Pasha, at the surrender of Taif in 1916, and who claimed to have taken part in some hundreds of campaigns. The force assembled by the end of April at Taif, and advanced towards Khurma by way of Turaba. At the latter place evidence of treasonable correspondence between its leading citizens and the enemy resulted in the summary execution of the offenders. The relatives of the victims licked the feet of 'Abdullah, helped him to build his entrenched camp in accordance with the most modern principles of warfare and sent an emissary to inform the enemy of its dispositions.

Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud, completely disregarding the warnings of the British Government, had set out with a hastily-collected army to the assistance of his threatened subjects of Khurma. The advanced guard duly reached the village, but Ibn Sa'ud himself and the main body had only reached the wells of Sakha, in the sands of the Najd highland district, when, on a night of mid-May, the impetuous Wahhabi chief of Khurma, Khalid ibn Luwai, precipitated a decisive action on receiving the information above mentioned about the defences of 'Abdullah. The latter, having inspected his dispositions and found them very good, was content to bide his time, and the whole camp was in high spirits in anticipation of an unopposed and glorious victory. The camp itself was impregnable, and its defenders slept in perfect peace and security. In the dead of night they woke suddenly to all the horrors of pandemonium lit up by the rifle flashes reflected on the naked steel of busy swords. The Wahhabis, having approached noiselessly, were in their midst with their blood-curdling war-cry; the Sharifian gunners were cut down as they slept at their guns or woken to serve them against the panic-stricken camp with swords of Damocles hanging over their own heads to encourage them. The confusion was complete, and 'Abdullah's soldiers were butchered as they rose from their beds or attempted to flee. 'Abdullah himself had fled at the first alarm with all his staff, scarcely more than a hundred survivors of the disaster, to Taif, and thence, joined by its panic-stricken inhabitants, to Mecca. The Sharifian army, sent with the full approval and moral support of the British Government to occupy Khurma, had been utterly annihilated by the

Wahhabis. Turaba, the scene of the disaster, was duly annexed to the Wahhabi territories by Ibn Sa'ud, who arrived on the scene a day or two later. The road to Mecca was open to the victors; and thousands of British-Indian and other foreign nationals, sojourning in the holy city in anticipation of the coming pilgrimage, streamed down to Jidda rather than face the dreaded visitation. The British Agent demanded a dozen steamers to carry away the refugees before death from thirst or disease should claim them or worse befall. Husain clamoured for immediate military support against the consequences of a just action which had been undertaken with the approval of Great Britain.

Such was the situation which confronted Lord Curzon and his interdepartmental conference in May, just two months after the decision which had provoked such consequences. The dearth of world shipping was far too acute at the time to warrant the diversion of any vessels for the benefit of the refugees at Jidda. The War Office declined to be drawn into anything in the nature of a military venture in Arabia at a moment when it was fully occupied with the problems of demobilisation and financial retrenchment. Apparently there was nothing to be done to stay the advance of Ibn Sa'ud and the Wahhabi occupation of the Hijaz. The prospect was certainly cheerless, and the suggestion that after all Ibn Sa'ud might not be advancing, and that therefore there was no real justification for panic, was brushed aside as too inane for consideration. Lord Curzon recognised that the battle of Turaba had once and for all decided the Khurma issue, and was not disposed to challenge any boundary which Ibn Sa'ud might consider reasonable provided he should agree to leave the Hijaz proper and the holy cities alone. On that basis he proposed to negotiate with the Wahhabi ruler, and to that end he despatched an emissary post-haste from London to conduct the negotiations. Meanwhile as a precautionary warning he issued orders for the discontinuance of Ibn Sa‘ud's subsidy—the telegram found its way into an intelligent waste-paper basket at Baghdad or Bahrain—and telegraphed the text of suitable letters to Jidda for immediate despatch to King Husain and Ibn Sa‘ud.

When the British emissary arrived in Egypt he was informed that Ibn Sa‘ud, so far from advancing on Mecca, had retired into his deserts more than content with his victory. He proceeded to Jidda with the idea of rejoining Ibn Sa‘ud by the land route across the Hijaz, but, on arrival, found that King Husain had sufficiently recovered from his initial panic to deprecate all idea of further conversations on the subject of his relations with his powerful and victorious neighbour. The British envoy was not allowed to land at Jidda, and in due course returned to London. The first round of the post-war tussle in Arabia had been won easily by the Wahhabis, whose appetite had been whetted by their astonishing success and by the first territorial acquisition which had rewarded their labours since the capture of the Hasa from the Turks in 1913. Husain allowed the Khurma dispute to go by default, and turned his attention to other methods of undermining the Wahhabi position. Ibn Sa‘ud continued to draw his British subsidy, and at the end of the year sent his son, Faisal, to convey his congratulations to the British Government on the Allied victory and to discuss in an informal and friendly manner the various matters which were of mutual interest and concern. The young envoy—for Faisal was not more than fourteen years of age at this time—and his cousin and political adviser, Ahmad ibn

Thunaian, created a favourable impression wherever they went, and were themselves duly impressed with what they saw in England and by the gaunt evidences of the War which they saw in the course of a prolonged tour of the whole Western Front. Meanwhile the Arabian situation remained quiescent.

Important developments were, however, in the air. The question of the Arabian borderlands had been disposed of by the leading Allied Powers at San Remo in a sense scarcely satisfactory to the *amour-propre* and ambition of King Husain, whose protests fell on deaf ears. An international Commission designed to secure a plebiscite representing the wishes of the people of Syria had failed to materialise owing to French susceptibilities and the sympathetic abstention of the British; but America persisted in a lone effort to find out what the Syrians really wanted, perhaps out of deference to the ideals preached at Versailles by President Wilson, and partly no doubt because of the interest in the question of the large Syrian community domiciled in the United States, and only less vocal than the American Zionists. The personnel of the American Commission of investigation was entirely admirable, but the report produced by Mr. King and Mr. Charles Crane was too bluntly realist to be published without danger of wrecking the concert of the Allies. Syria claimed independence in virtue of the promises made by Sir Henry Macmahon; in the alternative, if that were out of the question and a mandate inevitable, she demanded an American mandate; if that again were ruled out in the circumstances, she asked that the mandate should be entrusted to Great Britain; on one point she was adamant—she would not have a French mandate at any price, and called attention to the principle laid down by the Allies that, in the selection of a mandatory, the wishes of the people to be mandated should be given due consideration. The King–Crane Report might well have been suspect had the Government of the United States desired to assume the responsibilities of a mandate, but nothing was further from its thoughts, and the Syrian desire for American guidance during the inevitable period of "tutelage" was stymied at the outset by America's decided refusal to assume the task. Great Britain was already pledged to be content with 'Iraq and Palestine, the share of the spoils allotted to her by her Allies and herself. The King–Crane Report was accordingly suppressed and the Syrian mandate was awarded to France. Sharif Faisal was advised to make the best of the situation by an accommodation with the French authorities, and this to some extent he achieved. It was agreed that he should rule the hinterland while the French held complete control of Bairut, the Lebanon and the coast. Such an arrangement seemed from the beginning to invite trouble, and the proclamation of Faisal as King of Syria in March 1920 scarcely improved the chances of peaceful developments. A breach soon occurred, and the battle of Maisalun in July finally settled the issue. Faisal left Damascus in a hurry, and proceeded *via* Haifa to Italy, and thence in due course to England, where some sort of consolation was being prepared for him by his friends. From that day onwards Syria has remained outside the orbit of Arabia proper, and under the more or less effective control of the French in their mandatory capacity. Its history, like that of Palestine, belongs rather to the history of imperial Europe than to that of Arabia. The fate of 'Iraq was not yet definitely settled, and the "No man's land" of Trans-Jordan was still in the melting-pot, though in both countries Great Britain was the controlling factor, while the Sharifian family harboured certain hopes and pretensions, whose nature had already been indicated by the proclamation of ‘Abdullah as King of ‘Iraq by an entirely non-representative gathering of ‘Iraqi officers of Faisal's Syrian army at Damascus in March 1920, simultaneously with the proclamation of his brother as King of Syria. It is indeed probable that, had the French been able to leave Faisal in Syria, which then included the Trans-Jordan districts, the Mesopotamian problem might have been solved by a British acceptance of ‘Abdullah in ‘Iraq, either to anticipate the rebellion of 1920 or as the result of it, by way of creating a solid curtain of Sharifian influence round the northern fringe of Arabia from Hali Point, half-way down the Red Sea coast, to the head of the Persian Gulf to screen the Wahhabi desert from the civilised world. Such, indeed, seems to have been the conscious aim of British policy both at this time and for some years later, though circumstances did not favour its realisation, and, in point of fact, not a single link of the chain has yet been able to stand the strain intended for it, while a part of it has broken irremediably.

The Mesopotamian rebellion does not fall within the scope of this survey of Arabian affairs, though the decision of the British Government to retrace its steps in that country and to invite its people to choose their own form of government could not be without some effect on affairs in the adjacent Arabian peninsula. Sir Percy Cox, who had been hurriedly recalled from Teheran on account of the alarming reports received from ‘Iraq, and had been nominated to proceed at once as the first British High Commissioner to introduce the new dispensation, considered it advisable to turn aside to meet Ibn Sa‘ud at ‘Uqair, on the Hasa coast, to explain the general aims of British policy, and incidentally to suggest for the Wahhabi monarch's consideration the desirability of a frontier demarcation between his territories and those of 'Iraq and the principality of Kuwait. This matter was pursued in conference some months later, but for the moment the meeting at 'Uqair was without incident, and Ibn Sa'ud was able to assure the new High Commissioner of his complete goodwill towards British aspirations in 'Iraq. He was also able to inform him of an important expansion of his own territories on the other side of the peninsula, where the highland districts of the province of 'Asir and its capital, Abha, had during the summer of 1920 been annexed by an expedition led by his son, Faisal, who had assumed command of the venture soon after his return from his successful European tour. The attacks on Khurma by the Sharif during 1918 and the following year had created something of a general ferment among the tribes of the Hijaz, 'Asir and Yaman borders; and the tenets of Wahhabism had been spread far and wide into areas where they had flourished a century earlier and from which they had never altogether disappeared. The 'Aidh clan, hereditary Governors of the Abha district, and not long since victims of the punitive expedition led into their hills by Sharif Husain in 1913, appear to have got into difficulties with the Idrisi, with the natural result that they appealed to Ibn Sa'ud, whose subjects they claimed to be, though the Wahhabi dynasty had exercised no effective sovereignty in 'Asir for more than a century. The result was Faisal's expedition, which even reached the coast at the Hijaz port of Qunfidha temporarily and definitely established Wahhabi rule in the inland mountainous districts. In doing so it did not disturb the relations of formal friendliness already subsisting from a distance between the Idrisi and Wahhabi houses.

King Husain was far from pleased with the firm establishment of Wahhabi authority in the districts round his south-western borders, which partly cut him off from communication with the Yaman—this was strikingly illustrated some time later by a Wahhabi attack on, and capture of a large pilgrim caravan coming up from the Yaman to Mecca—and greatly affected his prestige. For the moment, however, he was helpless in face of the growing strength of his rival, and it was to Ibn Rashid that he looked for a restoration of some sort of balance of power in Arabia. He was able to provide him with the sinews of war in the shape of arms and money, but his intrigues did not pass unnoticed by Ibn Sa'ud, who now began to realise clearly that the elimination of the Shammar power from the north was a condition precedent of his own security and ultimate success in the race for Arabian hegemony. Fortune favoured him in an unexpected, though not unusual, manner, for in the autumn of 1920 Sa'ud ibn Rashid, who, under the skilful guidance of successive members of the Subhan family, had emerged from the Great War unscathed and even with enhanced prestige, was suddenly swept off his throne by assassination, and succeeded by his nephew, 'Abdullah ibn Mit'ab. Sa'ud's chief adviser during the period immediately preceding his death had been 'Aqab ibn 'Ajil, a leading chief of the Shammar and also the Prince's father-in-law, who not only conducted the negotiations with King Husain to a satisfactory conclusion, but also secured the retrocession of the Jauf district by the Sha'lan family, which had held it for the previous ten years. Outwardly all seemed well with the house of Rashid, which found some support in the pronounced sympathy of Miss Gertrude Bell and other British officials, both at Baghdad and in London, though there was no wish on the part of the British Government to jeopardise the established good relations with Ibn Sa'ud by any outward manifestation of sympathy with his rival. Inwardly, however, the affairs of Jabal Shammar were far from prosperous. In spite of some gains from the contraband trade which had been carried on during the War, the people of Hail had on the whole been ruined by the blockade, and the Shammar tribesmen found their freedom of movement considerably restricted both by the imposition of some sort of control on their former free access to the desert "ports" like Najaf and Samawa, and by the ever-present threat of Wahhabi marauders. Townsmen and tribesmen alike clamoured for the old peace and security, whose absence was naturally imputed to the Government, and a considerable section of public opinion began to form round 'Abdullah ibn Talal, who was, in fact, the senior member of the dynasty, being a great-grandson of Talal ibn 'Abdullah, who had reigned from 1847 to 1868. An accident precipitated developments. Sa'ud had sallied out, as the Princes of Arabia are wont to do, for a picnic in the environs of Hail, and with him went the *élite* of the town, including 'Abdullah and the other princes of the royal house. In the course of an impromptu shooting match, the ruling Prince had presumed to rally his cousin on his lack of skill as a marksman; and 'Abdullah's next mark was his sovereign's head. He missed not, but he was himself immediately cut down by Sa'ud's slaves, and the throne of Hail passed to 'Abdullah ibn Mit'ab, who, in the interests of his own security, threw the assassin's brother, Muhammad, into the castle dungeon. The aim of the reformers had gone awry, and Hail, instead of having a strong and capable monarch, was again the prey of a weak régime. Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud was watching the situation from the south, and there were not wanting well-meaning citizens of Hail who sent messages to him encouraging him to come and put an end to their intolerable situation.

He himself was perhaps actuated by other motives, and political developments in ‘Iraq had as much to do with the speeding up of operations against Hail as the desire to eliminate Ibn Rashid. Sharifian encouragement of the latter could be safely ignored so long as it emanated from Mecca, but the situation began to look more serious when British policy was seen to be trending in the direction of the establishment of a Sharifian régime also in ‘Iraq. With support on both flanks and British goodwill in the background, Hail might well become once more a serious danger to Wahhabi interests. Ibn Sa‘ud hesitated no longer. His troops, under his brother Muhammad, moved up into the north, while the Ikhwan levies, under Faisal al Duwish, operated in the eastern desert, and Nuri Sha‘lan supported the movement with pressure on Jauf and the northern districts. These movements were launched during the spring of 1921, by which time the Conference convened at Cairo by Mr. Winston Churchill, who had now become responsible for the fate of the British mandated territories as Secretary of State for the Colonies, had definitely decided that Faisal, the third son of King Husain, should proceed to ‘Iraq as a candidate for its throne with all the backing of the British Government. In April the only serious obstacle in the path of such a policy was removed by Sir Percy Cox's summary deportation of Saiyid Talib al Naqib, whom we have already met representing the Ottoman Government in various dealings with Ibn Sa‘ud, and who was at this time Minister of the Interior in the provisional Government set up by Sir Percy Cox in October 1920, after the rebellion. And in June Faisal duly arrived at Basra in a British transport, while the so-called plebiscite to ascertain the views of the people of ‘Iraq shortly afterwards confirmed Mr. Churchill's view that Faisal would be an ideal King for the mandated territory.

Now Faisal was already flirting with the Shammar, who during these few months had been drifting down from the troubled and profitless deserts of their own country to the greater peace and plenty of the Euphrates' marches, where they were not only warmly received by the king-elect, but also provided with arms, money and provisions for the maintenance of a guerilla campaign against the slowly advancing army of the Wahhabis. Faisal was doing what he could to help his father's cause and to perpetuate an effective balance of power in the desert, and, while he was not outwardly encouraged in this policy by the British authorities, his actions did not pass unnoticed by the representatives of Ibn Sa‘ud at Baghdad, who at this time were engaged in discussing with Sir Percy Cox the preliminaries of an agreement for the fixing of the frontiers between the Wahhabi domain and the two states of ‘Iraq and Kuwait. Their reports made Ibn Sa‘ud realise that he could no longer afford to play the tortoise in the race for Arabian hegemony; the consolidation of Faisal's position in ‘Iraq might well be followed by the creation under the veiled auspices of Great Britain of an anti-Wahhabi league embracing the whole of northern Arabia above an arc joining Mecca and Basra. The position seemed to him so serious and urgent that he took the field in person in July, after the successful termination of a conference at Riyadh, in the course of which he had been acclaimed by the Wahhabi chiefs and ‘Ulama as Sultan of Najd and its Dependencies.

Himself remaining in the Qasim, he sent forward two detachments respectively under his brother Muhammad and his son Sa'ud to begin the siege of Hail and to harry the countryside and guard against possible attacks by the Shammar elements sojourning in 'Iraq.

Meanwhile he himself received a deputation of the citizens of Hail, and made it clear to the members thereof that he intended to press the campaign vigorously unless they were prepared to accept his *sine qua non* condition that the Rashid dynasty should abdicate forthwith and its members surrender their persons to him. The deputation withdrew crestfallen, and the proffered terms were refused by 'Abdullah ibn Mit'ab, but the latter was not destined to hold his throne for long. The situation in the north, where Nuri Sha'lan had seized Jauf, demanded immediate measures of relief, and in his extremity he had released from prison Muhammad ibn Talal, the brother of the slain assassin of Sa'ud, to place him at the head of a force intended for the recovery of Jauf. The latter had now returned to Hail determined to assert his right to the throne against his weak and vacillating cousin, and 'Abdullah, deeming discretion the better part of valour, fled to fling himself on the discretion of the Wahhabi invader, who took him down to Riyadh, where he has sojourned in captivity to this day. Meanwhile the more vigorous Muhammad ibn Talal, being recognised as ruler of Hail, began to take the offensive against the Wahhabis, and Ibn Sa'ud once more set forth from his capital to crush the new movement before it should assume dangerous proportions. Faisal al Duwish was sent forward with 2000 of his Mutair to watch the movements of the Shammar forces, which had moved out to the neighbourhood of Jithamiya and Taisiya to meet the enemy. Faisal was not in sufficient strength to launch an attack on

Muhammad's superior positions, and the two armies remained facing each other until September 8th, when Ibn Sa'ud himself arrived at Baqa'a just in time to receive the news that Muhammad had made a surprise assault on Duwish, but had been beaten after a fight of considerable severity. The Wahhabi Sultan hurried up to complete the discomfiture of the enemy, who had taken refuge in various forts of the neighbourhood; and at dawn he opened on them with his guns, while his men advanced to the assault. Muhammed ibn Talal and his bodyguard fled by way of Jabal 'Aja to Hail; and the forts surrendered after a short bombardment. The battle was over almost before it had begun, and Muhammad ibn Talal offered to submit on condition that he should remain ruler of the province under the suzerainty of Ibn Sa'ud. Such a condition was unacceptable to the Wahhabi Sultan, who now made the necessary dispositions for the siege of the city, in which a considerable party was sympathetic towards him and promised to work for early surrender if he would desist for a while from bombardment, while the Shammar ruler wrote to Baghdad imploring the mediation of the British High Commissioner and of Faisal, who had been crowned King in August. Some weeks later Ibn Sa'ud, tiring of inactivity, sent a message to his supporters in the city informing them that, as he had already allowed them plenty of time to arrange matters according to their promises, he proposed to begin a bombardment in three days' time if it had not surrendered in the interval. Without further ado the gates were opened, and a force sent by Ibn Sa'ud had no difficulty in occupying the town, though Muhammad ibn Talal shut himself up in the great fort to stand a siege or to parley, as circumstances might dictate. After a brief exchange of messages, and on Ibn Sa'ud's guarantee of his personal immunity from all ill treatment, he decided to surrender on November 2nd, 1921, when the siege had lasted rather less than two months. Like his immediate predecessor, he was sent to sojourn in honourable captivity at Riyadh, and with him ended the rule of the Rashids, after a chequered though sometimes brilliant career of close on ninety years, during which thirteen members, representing five generations of the family, had occupied the throne. And once again, after more than a hundred years, Arabia Deserta found itself united under the sway of a single, ruler.

Ibrahim ibn Subhan, of the family which had provided successive regents during the minority of the Amir Sa‘ud, was now appointed the first Governor of Hail under the Wahhabi régime, and the conqueror spared no effort to restore to the city something of the old prosperity which had so long been eclipsed. The immediate wants of the population, which had during the past few months been reduced to the extreme of starvation, were catered for from the stores of the besieging force; and the routes to the coast and to ‘Iraq and Syria were thrown open for the resumption of commerce. The old sores healed rapidly, and Hail has recovered something of its former prosperity under the new régime of peace and goodwill, though not its earlier political importance. Its administrative importance was, however, recognised a year or two later by the appointment of a new Governor chosen from the royal family itself, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn Musa‘id ibn Jiluwi; and the only wound which has not yet healed is that caused by the secession of certain elements of the Shammar tribe during the troubles of 1921 and their subsequent adoption of a domicile in ‘Iraq in preference to returning to their old home under its new régime. These Shammar refugees have scarcely proved a valuable asset to the new kingdom of ‘Iraq, whose rulers have sedulously fostered in them a spirit of irredentism which has at intervals manifested itself in raids against the Wahhabi territories, and thus created a series of incidents for the embarrassment of the diplomatists of both countries. The problem is still unsolved, but its solution is admittedly a condition precedent of the establishment of cordial relations between Najd and ‘Iraq. And the British Government, in view of its commitments in respect of the latter country, must face and choose between the only two alternatives which can provide a permanent settlement of an unfortunate and unnecessary controversy. The dissident Shammar must either be sent back to their own country to make their peace with its master, or the British Government should unconditionally accept responsibility for any excesses they may commit against Najd while enjoying its protection and hospitality.

The capture of Hail by Ibn Sa‘ud was an event of primary importance in the modern history of Arabia. By it a solid wedge of Wahhabi influence was driven in far to the north between the Sharifian régimes in the Hijaz and ‘Iraq, with its sharp end impinging on the weakest spot in the chain of Sharifian dominions which British policy had succeeded or resulted in creating in the borderlands of northern Arabia. When Mr. Churchill, in the spring of 1921, was at Cairo engaged in taking stock of the implications of British policy in Arab lands, the experts whom he had assembled to consider and advise him on the situation were astonished by a telegram from Jerusalem announcing the arrival at ‘Amman in the Trans-Jordan territory of King Husain’s second son, ‘Abdullah, with an army destined for an attack on the French in Syria. British responsibility to avert such a calamity was fully recognised by the Conference, which, however, had no troops at its disposal to challenge ‘Abdullah’s advance. It was decided therefore to offer him the rulership of Trans-Jordan on condition of his undertaking to respect the integrity of the French mandated sphere in Syria. ‘Abdullah preferred the meat to the uncertain shadow, and promptly closed with the offer, whereupon he found himself, perhaps somewhat to his own surprise, the recognised ruler of Trans-Jordan, with his capital at ‘Amman and a substantial financial subsidy at the charge of the British tax-payer. This development took place in the spring of 1921, and ‘Abdullah’s reign formally began on April 1st. Such a development was probably no more to the liking of the British Government than to that of the French authorities in Syria, but, with Hail still in the hands of the Rashid dynasty and ‘Iraq already earmarked for Faisal, it promised the possibility of a solid block of territory in northern Arabia under direct or indirect British influence or control. From the British point of view there were distinct compensations in this product of an untoward and unforeseen accident; but the establishment of yet another Sharifian state in the Arabian borderlands, and this time athwart his ultimate communications with Syria, could have been nothing but distasteful to Ibn Sa‘ud. The main current of the history of Trans-Jordan does not here concern us, and it will therefore be sufficient, while reserving the future contacts of the country with Najd for mention in their proper place, to remark that, for one reason or another, Trans-Jordan gradually lost its independent status, and came more and more under the direct control of the British Government represented by the High Commissioner for Palestine and his staff, until in 1928 without ceasing to be under the same control it received the semblance of a constitution under the auspices of a treaty with Great Britain. For the general purposes of Arabian history it may conveniently be regarded as forming part of a chain of Sharif-ruled states whose policy was essentially hostile to the Wahhabi régime from 1921 onwards.

That the completion of this Sharifian chain was the result of accident rather than design scarcely admits of argument. For the moment, nevertheless, it seemed that the Sharifian cause had gained a solid advantage over Ibn Sa'ud; but the capture of Hail went far towards righting the balance, and, if anything, Ibn Sa'ud, with his central situation, could claim the advantage of position by the end of the year, whose closing stages witnessed the successful efforts of Sir Percy Cox to secure a definition of the boundaries between Najd and 'Iraq—he had already satisfactorily arranged a demarcation between Najd and Kuwait, with a semi-circular neutral zone designed to prevent accidental conflicts—in the Treaty of Muhammara, which was signed on behalf of the 'Iraq Government by the Minister for Public Works, Subhi Bey Nashat, and on behalf of the Wahhabi ruler by his representative, Ahmad ibn Thunaian, who had accompanied the young Prince Faisal to Europe two years before.

This treaty was promptly repudiated by Ibn Sa'ud, on the ground that his envoy had exceeded his instructions. The suggested frontier involved sacrifices in favour of 'Iraq which he was by no means prepared to make without anything in the shape of a palatable *quid pro quo*, and he was further incensed at the failure of the negotiators to make any provision for the enjoyment by the Najd tribes of their immemorial grazing rights in the territory which it was proposed to include within the frontiers of ‘Iraq. He insisted on the reconsideration of the whole matter in a further conference, which he proposed to attend in person and to which he invited Sir Percy Cox. The latter could scarcely refuse so reasonable a request, and it was arranged that the parties should meet at ‘Uqair on the Hasa coast during the winter of 1922–23.

Meanwhile Ibn Sa‘ud had been active in consolidating the situation created by the capture of Hail, and his armies spread out towards the western and northern frontiers of the Shammar country. During the summer of 1922 the important oases of Khaibar and Taima were occupied and placed under effective Wahhabi administration; while the spread of Wahhabi influence towards the Ruwala country in the north gave rise to dissensions among the inhabitants of the Jauf district and the villages of Wadi Sirhan. Since the extrusion of the Rashid Government from these districts in 1920 they had been more or less under the control of Nuri Sha‘lan, the chief of the Ruwala tribe; but Nuri himself was content to leave the actual administration of these oases to his young grandson, Sultan ibn Nawwaf, while he himself alternately courted the French authorities at Damascus, whose flesh-pots were a delight to him on the threshold of old age, and ‘Abdullah at ‘Amman, who was ever ready to pay out subsidies in return for lip-service. Assuming that ‘Abdullah's ambitions represented the general lines of British policy, Nuri was content to recognise his vague suzerainty over the districts east of Trans-Jordan, so long as he paid for so barren and uncomfortable an honour and left him undisturbed to enjoy the amenities of life in Syria with the financial assistance of the French. His attitude towards Ibn Sa‘ud's pretensions to suzerainty, or more than suzerainty, over Jauf and its suburbs was probably exactly similar to that which he adopted towards ‘Abdullah; and at about this time he sent his nephew, Mujhim, down on a visit to Ibn Sa‘ud at Hail, to explain that he did not really much care who ruled Jauf provided that it was not himself.

It is scarcely surprising that in these circumstances the people of Jauf and the Sirhan villages, which contained important salt deposits of interest to the markets of Syria, began to think for themselves without undue regard for the susceptibilities of their nominal rulers, and the appearance at their doors of Wahhabi raiding-parties somewhat inclined them to adopt an allegiance which would probably involve the least disturbance of their general independence and prosperity. A definite pro-Wahhabi party began to form at Sakaka, the most populous town of the Jauf oasis-group, under one Ibn Muwaishir, during the spring of 1922, and a month or two later it raised the standard of revolt in the name of Ibn Sa‘ud. The youthful Sultan, after a preliminary and unsuccessful effort to suppress the movement, deemed it wiser to withdraw to the comparative security of Wadi Sirhan, and to leave a faithful slave, Daujan by name, to maintain the honour and flag of his absentee grandfather. The rebel leader, Hamad ibn Muwaishir, found his position none too easy in the absence of the Wahhabi reinforcements, on whose arrival he had calculated; and by the end of May he was cooped up, with a following of about seventy men, in a corner of the Sakaka oasis, while the loyalists held the main fort and the rest of the district. Meanwhile a Wahhabi force, leaving Jauf and Sakaka to one side, had penetrated unobserved as far as the Salt villages of Wadi Sirhan, and suddenly fell upon Sultan and the Ruwala camp. In the battle which ensued the

Wahhabis were beaten off with loss; but they proved to be only a wing of the force which was moving up on Jauf. The main body reached the oasis in July, and Ibn Muwaishir's defensive developed into an offensive, as the result of which the people of Jauf without further ado accepted Wahhabi rule and renounced their allegiance to Nuri Sha'lan. Thus did Ibn Sa'ud add yet another province to his realm with scarce an effort, but in the following month his fanatical Ikhwan overreached themselves in an adventure which was as spectacular as it was disastrous to those taking part in it. Starting from the colony of Nifi in Central Arabia, a force of nearly a thousand fanatics, under a chief of the Harb tribe, suddenly appeared before the little village of Tunaib, about fifteen miles from 'Amman itself. The five and thirty men, women and children who constituted the whole population were mercilessly massacred before the neighbouring villages were alarmed. Then it was the turn of the raiders themselves to suffer for their temerity. A passing British aeroplane warned the Air Force headquarters at 'Amman; and the Bani Sakhr tribesmen, who had swarmed out of their villages and camps to do battle against the Wahhabis, were soon joined by British armoured cars and aeroplanes in a running fight which soon became a massacre. All day long the stream of fugitives spread over the waterless plain, dying of thirst or killed by bombs and machine-gun fire. For most of them it must have been their first experience of modern methods of warfare; and few indeed can have returned to tell of their tribulations. The rest were left to rot where they lay on the sun-scorched plain; and the Amir 'Abdullah, with British approval, hastily sent a garrison to occupy the village of Kaf, the capital of Wadi Sirhan, while Ibn Sa'ud was able to disown the expedition which had roused more than Trans-Jordan to a vivid sense of danger brewing in the bowels of Arabia. He had clearly neither planned nor sanctioned it; and there was no one left of it to punish.

When the Wahhabi Sultan met Sir Percy Cox at the end of the year at ‘Uqair to discuss the revision of the Muhammara Treaty, he seemed to be at the very zenith of his power; and the British Government, while it insisted quite definitely on his restraining his followers from any trespass on its mandatory spheres or on such territories as those of Kuwait, was by no means disposed to challenge his supremacy in Central Arabia or to allow the Sharifian rulers of ‘Iraq and Trans-Jordan to indulge in hostilities against him. He was still in enjoyment of the monthly subsidy of £5000, and he found Sir Percy Cox prepared to meet him half-way in any reasonable objections to the Treaty of Muhammara as signed by his representative, though without authority. Ibn Sa‘ud himself was by no means enamoured of the seemingly meaningless proposition of a fixed frontier in a featureless desert which had never been accurately surveyed, and whose tribes had for centuries roamed over it without let or hindrance in search of water or pasture. With goodwill on both sides an indeterminate frontier with a definite understanding regarding the proper allegiance of the various tribes concerned—the Mutair, the Dhafir, the Dahamisha ‘Anaza and the refugee Shammar—would be better than a line which no tribesman could possibly be expected to recognise on the spot. But Sir Percy Cox insisted on a frontier, while he was prepared to concede the right of the Najd tribes to cross it for water or pasture when circumstances demanded. The negotiations came very near to a complete rupture, but, at the last moment, the Wahhabi Sultan relented, in spite of his strong prejudice against the fixed frontier, and some further conversation on the subject produced a further concession on the part of the British representative, who agreed that, to make the right of tribal access to water and pasture a real thing, neither party should on any account use the various watering-places on either side of the proposed line for military purposes, or build forts or any kindred structure thereon. This was an important concession, as the sequel will show; and the agreement now arrived at was embodied in an instrument known as the Protocol of ‘Uqair, to be read in conjunction with the Treaty of Muhammara, in which the details of the agreed frontier line had been set forth. Ibn Sa‘ud had undoubtedly gained something by insisting on a re-discussion of the original treaty; but the final agreement to which he set his seal at ‘Uqair was unquestionably a triumph for the diplomacy of Sir Percy Cox. The principle of a fixed frontier had gained the day, and thus a definite limit had been put to possible Wahhabi expansion in the direction of ‘Iraq, as had already been done in the somewhat similar case of Kuwait.

Nevertheless the Conference of ‘Uqair had served rather to accentuate than to alleviate the burning issues of Sharifian and Wahhabi rivalry; and it is at least questionable whether it would not have been wiser in the long run to satisfy Ibn Sa‘ud's aspirations in a desert area of no practical utility except to the roaming Badawin, in return for an undertaking on his part to respect the frontiers of the Hijaz, which called for demarcation much more insistently than those of ‘Iraq, which could scarcely have been violated by Ibn Sa‘ud, in view of his knowledge of British interests in that country. Sir Percy Cox was, however, only concerned to secure what he deemed to be needed by the new state of ‘Iraq; and Ibn Sa‘ud was unwisely left with a sense of injury which could ultimately only find a vent in a direction essentially more dangerous to the general Sharifian interest. His spirits were not improved by an access of serious illness soon after the ʻUqair conference, which gave rise to widespread rumours of his death, and consequently to a certain amount of speculation as to the effect of his demise on the affairs of Arabia. The doctors of the American mission at Bahrain were called in to attend the ailing monarch, and it was soon known that he was at any rate out of danger. But these months of the spring and early summer of 1923 marked an epoch of general unrest on the frontiers of the Wahhabi country; and the British Government slowly and somewhat unwillingly arrived at the conclusion that no real improvement could be expected in the Arabian situation unless a serious effort were made to compose the bitter differences which divided the various rulers of the Sharifian states and the Sultan of Wahhabi Arabia. It was a thankless task, and King Husain, now thoroughly disgruntled by the discontinuance of his subsidy and by a definite change in the British attitude towards him in consequence of his rejection of a somewhat humiliating draft treaty offered for his consideration by Lawrence in the summer of 1921, would listen to no talk of a settlement except on the basis of a complete restitution by Ibn Saʻud of all territory won by him since the War, including Hail and even Khurma. Faisal was, however, too happy in ʻIraq to concern himself with his father's intransigeance, while he was anxious to make amends for a petty incident which had somewhat marred the official celebration of the anniversary of his accession, and had created a momentary tension between himself and the High Commissioner. He accordingly declared himself ready to meet Ibn Saʻud in conference with a view to a general settlement on the basis of the facts of the situation. ‘Abdullah, on the other hand, adopted an attitude of filial loyalty, and, realising that the sands of his own independence were fast running out owing to his reckless misuse of the authority vested in him—the ‘Adwan revolt of September 1923 should have warned him that he was straining the patience both of his people and of his protectors,—refused to attend any meeting without his father’s approval. Nevertheless, the British Government held the trump cards against the Sharifian elements, which were now known to be incapable of asserting themselves in arms against the Wahhabis, and which would therefore be forced to accept any settlement which had its blessing. Indeed, both Husain and ‘Abdullah secretly desired that their ultimate acceptance of any settlement should, on the face of it, have the appearance of dictation by *force majeure*, their object being to curry favour with Arab nationalist opinion and to create an anti-British atmosphere in their own interests.

The British Government rightly enough insisted on going through with the proposed conference, and, Ibn Sa‘ud being agreeable, the delegates of Najd and ‘Iraq duly assembled at Kuwait in November 1923, under the presidency of Colonel S. G. Knox, who had lately been acting as Resident in the Persian Gulf, and had previously been Chief Judicial Officer in Mesopotamia. The British Government’s choice of a President had much to commend it; the Conference of Kuwait was fraught with serious consequences, and nothing could avert those consequences but a settlement guaranteed by Great Britain; but such a settlement would be useless unless freely agreed to by both parties, whatever its nature. It was, however, at this point that the British Government made a fatal error. The formal meetings had scarcely begun when Colonel Knox received instructions from his Government indicating the lines of a solution which would be regarded as satisfactory. Those instructions doomed the Conference to failure, and, as was pointed out at the time, its failure meant war. The British President became an interested party to the discussions rather than an impartial assessor and arbitrator, as he should have been ; but Colonel Knox was in no way blamable for the ultimate breakdown of the Conference, which was directly due to the unwise intervention of the Colonial Office.

Briefly, the British aim was to secure a settlement by compromise at a time when the *status quo* at the moment of the Conference was the only possible basis of agreement likely to meet with any acceptance in Najd. It was actually proposed that Ibn Sa'ud should relinquish Khurma and Turaba in favour of the Sharif —the resurrection of that long-settled controversy was the most unfortunate feature of the British proposals—and also that he should give up the more recently conquered Khaibar and Taima; while, in compensation for these concessions, he was to be offered the Salt villages of Wadi Sirhan, which the British authorities had no desire to hold and which he could have occupied for the trouble of sending up the personnel to take them over. The proposal was too preposterous to stand a dog's chance at the Conference table. In effect the British Government asked Ibn Sa'ud to surrender something which he valued very highly, which he had already defended against all comers, and which he neither would nor could give up, in return for something which it did not want itself and which was already his for the taking—he did take it, in fact, some weeks after the breakdown of the Conference.

Clearly no agreement was possible on these lines, and the representatives of Najd returned to report to Ibn Sa'ud, while the British authorities undertook to attempt to secure the representation of the Hijaz and Trans-Jordan at the resumption of the discussions. Meanwhile King Husain, tired of being relegated to a secondary place in the scheme of things Arabian, had conceived the idea, as brilliant from his point of view as it was inconvenient from that of the British Government, of asserting himself by making a ceremonial visit to Trans-Jordan, which he insisted on regarding as a province of his own kingdom—an idea in which he received much dutiful encouragement from his son 'Abdullah. The old King, who arrived at 'Aqaba, and soon after at 'Amman, in January 1924, conducted himself with a dignity and majesty which greatly impressed everybody who came into contact with him: he sat daily to receive public and private complaints against the administration of his wayward son; the High Commissioner for Palestine paid him a visit of ceremony, and was distinctly disconcerted by his lofty attitude of control of the house in which he was technically only an honoured guest; he was also nonplussed by the unerring instinct which led the old man to put his finger on the glaring deficiencies of administration due to a mandatory system based on the vagaries of his incompetent son. It can scarcely be doubted that the acceptance of Husain's claim to supreme authority in Trans-Jordan would have been in the true interests of that unhappy country, faced as it was with the alternative of direct control by the Government of Palestine. With his sphere so extended and the fruition of an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud on the basis of the actual facts of the situation, Arabia might have entered on an era of peace and prosperity; while the reconditioning of the southern section of the Hijaz Railway from Madina northward to Ma'an by his eldest son, ‘Ali, and the practical assumption of control of the line from ‘Amman southward by him, promised a much-needed improvement in the depressed economic situation of Trans-Jordan. In any case the dominant factor in the situation during these first months of 1924 was the apparently indefinite prospect of Husain remaining in the country and directing its affairs by reason of ‘Abdullah’s complete surrender in the terrible presence. The British Government, without in any way acknowledging his right of intervention in the affairs of a territory under its own mandatory control, seemed to be hypnotised by the very audacity of an attitude which they could not challenge without an appearance of impertinence. And no one could foretell what the end of the matter might be, while discreet inquiries as to the probable date of Husain’s departure, for which all facilities were offered with both hands, were met by mild expressions of astonishment at the very suggestion that he could be guilty of leaving a country so dear to him until he had placed its administration on a sound basis. It was even suggested that he contemplated replacing ‘Abdullah by ‘Ali as a more competent ruler, and this solution would have been enthusiastically received by the whole population of Trans-Jordan.

The British Government was clearly on the horns of a dilemma, and it was an accident, as opportune as it was unexpected, that extricated it from an astonishing impasse. Fate had a rod in pickle for Husain, and produced it at this moment with an innocent smile. *Deus quem perdere vult prius dementat.* And it was the new Turks of Angora that led the old King up to the mount of temptation for his undoing. After their crushing victory over the Greeks in 1922 the Turks had resolutely turned their backs on the past, and launched out on the path of modernisation without scrupling to jettison alike the assets and the liabilities of the Ottoman Empire. The capitulatory privileges of the Europeans residing in Turkey were denounced, and the Christian minorities who formed part of the population of the old Empire were either driven out or deprived of the benefits which European pressure in the past had obtained for them. The Ottoman Sultanate, now but a shadow of its former self, was abolished, and the sovereign authority vested in the National Assembly; but the State religion was for the moment left untouched, and the Califate, shorn of all temporal authority, remained to remind the world that Islam was still a protégé of the successors of the Sultans. 'Abdul Majid Effendi of the Osmanli dynasty replaced his deposed predecessor, Sultan Wahid al Din, in the new office; and the Turks continued the experiment of modernising their institutions, in the hope that the greatest of them all would accommodate itself gracefully to the new régime. This hope, perhaps never very seriously entertained by Mustafa Kamal, was doomed to disappointment, and the 'Ulama and Dervishes signed their own death warrant by maintaining an attitude of stubbornness towards the godless reforms of the saviour of their country. The Prophet's mantle recalled the glories of the past with an insistence which jeopardised the steady progress envisaged for the future; while the compensating advantages of its possession were negligible to one who looked to the free-thinking West rather than to the Muslim East for sympathy with his programme. Therefore on March 3rd, 1924, the National Assembly voted a decree abolishing for ever the institution of the Califate. The last Turkish Calif followed the last Turkish Sultan into exile; the Turkish State stood out before the world free of the trammels of religion. A thrill of horror went round the communities of the

Muslim world; and Husain ibn 'Ali grasped eagerly at the precious relic of his great ancestor which had been spurned by an impious people. Since 1915, as was evident from his correspondence with Sir Henry Macmahon, he had coveted the Califate, and the British Government had assured him that it would welcome the accession of an Arab of pure race to that dignity. It was now his for the taking, but much had happened in nine years to make the British Government supremely indifferent to his claims, and it now officially adopted the attitude that the ultimate disposal of the Prophet's mantle was a question for the decision of the Islamic world. No other attitude would have been possible in the circumstances.

'Abdullah played a prominent part in organising the necessary preliminaries to the public declaration of his father's assumption of the vacant Califate. The ecclesiastical luminaries of Mecca and Madina obediently telegraphed an invitation to the old King, begging him to do his obvious duty to Islam. Lesser ecclesiastics in the Hijaz and Trans-Jordan did the same, while some encouragement was also forthcoming from Palestine, Syria and 'Iraq. And on March 6th, only three days after the memorable decree of the Angora Assembly, King Husain caused it to be declared that he had humbly submitted to the will of his people and of the Almighty in assuming the style and title of "Prince of the Faithful and Successor of the Prophet." The accomplished fact was greeted from the various territories under Sharifian influence with telegrams of congratulation, and for a moment it seemed that a new chapter had opened in the history of Islam. It might indeed have been so if King Husain himself had raised a finger to save the Conference of Kuwait from the failure which threatened ever more insistently to put an end to it, and to all hope of peace in Arabia. ‘Abdullah was not blind to the advantages of an immediate settlement with Ibn Sa‘ud, even at the expense of wide concessions, and forthwith nominated a representative to attend the dying Conference and despatched him by air to his destination. But the old man remained obdurate—he could bear anything, but not surrender to an Arabian rival—and it was only under great pressure brought to bear by ‘Abdullah and Faisal that at length he consented to be represented by his fourth son, Zaid, subject to considerable restrictions on his discretion. And that much he only conceded to be free to return to Mecca forthwith to organise the new greatness that had come to him so suddenly and so unexpectedly. He no longer evinced any interest in the affairs of Trans-Jordan, and on March 24th he sailed away from ‘Aqaba, leaving that unhappy country to its fate and facing his own with unshakable confidence in himself. A month later Trans-Jordan was running in double harness with Palestine under the firm and skilful control of Great Britain; and six months had scarcely gone by when Husain was back at ‘Aqaba, a broken exile.

Meanwhile the Kuwait Conference had reassembled, but the steps taken to save it from collapse had been taken too late. On the lines laid down for the guidance of the British President failure had been inevitable from the beginning, and the original instructions had not been modified. Colonel Knox, unable to make any progress against the firm attitude of the Wahhabi delegates, became irritable, and reported that their intransigeance rendered all hope of settlement nugatory. The British Government was tiring of a game which its own initial error had reduced to a farce. And the slightest thing would have been sufficient to dissolve the Conference. The *coup de grâce* was given to it by the Wahhabis, whose impatient tribesmen chose the psychological moment of extreme tension to make a raid against the shepherd tribes of ‘Iraq. In the second week of April the Colonial Office decided to break up the Conference in despair of a settlement. More harm had been done by it than good, though much good might have been done by more adroit handling of the problems in issue. It was now obvious that war alone would clear the air of Arabia, and the summer months were passed by the Arabian tribes in a fever of preparation, while the Sharifian borderlands and the British Government lived in a fool's Paradise of vain hope that all would be well.

By August rumour had it that the Wahhabi forces had mobilised in their full strength, with a dozen columns each with a different objective. In fact only two blows were struck, and in each case they came as bolts from the blue, with very different results. The first was a complete failure. A large force of tribesmen appeared suddenly in August, as they had done two years before, in the fertile plain athwart the Hijaz Railway at Ziziya. An Air Force motor-lorry, on its way to the aerodrome at that spot, was apprised by fugitives of the Wahhabi attack, and immediately returned to warn the authorities at ‘Amman. Aeroplanes were sent out to attack the raiders, who fled and were pursued and shot down. As on the previous occasion, few can have returned to Najd to report their failure, and before the news of the affair could reach Ibn Sa‘ud in the shape of a strong British protest against the violation of mandated territory, the second blow had fallen, and the tender susceptibilities of a world which had experienced the horrors of the Great War were shocked by lurid tales of a bloody massacre at Taif. The story was grossly exaggerated for the purpose of securing sympathy for the Sharifian cause, and the total death-roll at Taif did not exceed 300 persons; but the easy capture of the summer capital of the Hijaz was in itself sufficiently shocking to those who still retained their faith in the stability of the young kingdom, which was to have been the rallying-point of a united Arabia.

It will be remembered that, when the victory of Turaba in 1919 had exposed Mecca itself to the danger of a Wahhabi occupation, Ibn Sa'ud had deliberately withdrawn his troops back into the desert, and put away from him the temptation to advance. He had been wise in his generation not to risk the alienation of European and British sympathy while the memory of Husain's services in the Great War was still fresh in men's minds; and be it said in justice to him that he probably was, as he had repeatedly proclaimed, without any ambition to occupy the holy cities of Islam. He had been anxious for an understanding with the Sharifian dynasty on honourable terms, and he had counted on Great Britain to arrange it by the mediation which she had promised. The collapse of the Conference of Kuwait spelled the bankruptcy of British diplomacy in Arabia and foreshadowed war; but it was the assumption of the Califate by Husain that raised the storm of hate in Wahhabi Arabia which was to burst on the Hijaz and sweep the Sharifian power from the throne. And Husain himself, living in the clouds with his extraordinary ambitions, not only neglected his defences, but seemed to go deliberately out of his way to demonstrate his unfitness to rule the Hijaz, much less the Arabian empire to which he aspired. In spite of ill-advised interference with the distant military operations of his son Faisal, which had provoked an inevitable rebuff, and his senseless hostility towards Ibn Sa'ud, the early years of his reign had given promise of a successful and popular régime.

But no sooner had the Armistice produced the inevitable *détente*, accompanied by an exhibition of the imperialistic acquisitiveness of his allies, than Husain launched out into a career of crazy despotism preserving all the outward forms of modern administration, though with nothing of its spirit or substance. The whole government of the Hijaz was focussed in the King's person; every official of the administration was assumed to be and treated as a rogue, being ill paid or paid not at all, on the assumption that he helped himself to what he needed out of the State revenues which passed through his hands; the State telegraphs, telephones and wireless service (the last partly inherited from the war and partly developed by himself) were personally managed by the King; motor transport, of which much had been hoped as a means of promoting the prosperity of the country, was reserved for the sole use of His Majesty; aeroplanes of long-discarded types were purchased at high prices and then left to rot because the King suspected robbery whenever an indent for spare parts or accessories was submitted for the royal approval; the army was kept on short rations and seldom paid; the Ministers of State were treated as private servants; and the representatives of foreign Powers were treated with scant respect, culminating in a ludicrous incident when the King, observing through his binoculars the planting of little red flags to mark the holes on the Jidda golf-course, despatched one of his aides-de-camp to remove the offensive signs of foreign penetration! In a word, the administration of the Hijaz had by 1924 become a byword of Gilbertian comedy, and the people groaned under a tyranny from which there was no escape because it had the apparent blessing of Great Britain. There were few who did not regret the passing of the spacious days of the old Turkish régime. Yet the fire of Wahhabism was the only obvious alternative to the Sharifian frying-pan. Prosperity refused to show her face in the Hijaz, and the pilgrims who were inveigled thither found too late that they had come to be fleeced first by the merchant-townsfolk, then by the rapacious Badawin, and finally by the King himself. They counted themselves lucky to get away with their lives and the pilgrimage to their credit; but in this same year of 1924, in the summer before the Wahhabi invasion, the competition of the King and the Harb tribesmen resulted in a fiasco which provoked open protests against the whole régime. The King, having been paid in advance for the camels required to take a large party of pilgrims from Mecca to Madina, had only paid half the right fare to the camel-owners destined to convey them; protests by the camel-men produced no result, and the pilgrims paid the penalty in being conveyed half-way and there left camelless, foodless and waterless to fend for themselves. At this stage the administration of the Hijaz had become a grave scandal among the Muslim races of the world, and Great Britain, conscious of her responsibility in the matter, dealt all too mildly with a king gone mad. But the King's cup was nearly full, and the time had arrived for him to drain it to the bitter dregs at the bidding of the hated Wahhabi rival.

The breakdown of the Kuwait Conference and the news of Husain's assumption of the Califate confronted Ibn Sa'ud with a situation which he could not control even if he had any desire to do so. At the same time the chief break on his freedom of action had been removed by the final decision of the British Government to discontinue the monthly subsidy of £5000, which had hitherto eked out the exiguous revenues of Najd, with effect from April 1st, 1924, a lump sum having, in fact, been paid in final liquidation of

British liabilities in this respect in the preceding November. Ibn Sa‘ud was thus constrained by economic pressure as much as by the moral urge within himself and the impatience of his people to adopt a policy of greater activity than heretofore; and, as we have seen, his armies were vaguely mobilising during the summer months against such contingencies as might present themselves to be turned to advantage. It would scarcely be true to represent the Wahhabi chief as having planned in detail the campaign which was to prove the crowning glory of his career. The wild attack on Trans-Jordan was a manifestation of a vague search for a suitable opening for effective action; other columns tapped unsuccessfully at the gates of ‘Iraq only to find them locked and guarded; yet another column under Sultan ibn Bijad, the head of the ‘Ataiba tribe, roamed in sections along the Hijaz frontier seeking something to devour, and one of these sections suddenly appeared before Taif at the beginning of September, when the King's eldest son, ‘Ali, had arrived there for a change of air after the stifling heat of a Meccan summer. It would be difficult to decide whether ‘Ali was more horrified at the appearance of the enemy at his door or the Wahhabis themselves more astonished at the panic their presence caused in a walled town with a garrison of regular troops. What actually happened will probably never be known, except that nothing in the nature of a pitched battle took place. The Wahhabis opened a desultory fire on the town and the neighbouring barracks, and ‘Ali, deciding that his force was not strong enough to defend the place, withdrew precipitately with all the available troops in the direction of Mecca. The citizens of Taif, seeing themselves thus abandoned, opened negotiations with the enemy and offered to surrender without resistance on a guarantee of their immunity from molestation. The guarantee was given, and the Wahhabi force approached the north gate of the town, which was opened to them. As they entered they were fired upon by the occupants of a police post, which had apparently not been warned of what had been arranged, and mistaking this act for deliberate treachery, they surged through the town, slaying and pillaging as they went. The confusion lasted through the night, and some 300 persons, including women and children, had been butchered in cold blood by dawn, when Sultan ibn Bijad, who had received the totally unexpected news of the capture of the town during the night, arrived and took charge of the situation. An amnesty was then proclaimed, and the bulk of the population, which had avoided massacre by keeping within doors, was then collected in a neighbouring garden, provided with food and allowed to depart for Mecca as transport could be provided. This was the story of one of the survivors of the Taif tragedy, who bore unsolicited witness not only to the moderation, but also to the kindness of Sultan ibn Bijad, and there would seem to be no reason to question its general accuracy. For the next day or two the hapless fugitives streamed down the road to Mecca, passing through the camp which ‘Ali had pitched on the plateau of Hadda to bar the Wahhabi advance on the capital. A few days later ‘Ali was attacked, and a desperate fight ended in his defeat and flight. His father refused to see a son so disgraced, and he passed through Mecca to Jidda, where the next act of the tragedy was played, while the Wahhabis were girding up their loins for the advance on Mecca itself. Husain stood his ground like a lion at bay, but the situation had passed beyond his control, and the citizens of Jidda hastily formed a national committee to decide on the policy to be adopted in face of the danger which threatened them. The leading personality of the town was the Director of Customs, Shaikh Muhammad al Tawil, who shared with the Queen—by all accounts a charming woman, with a vigorous intellect and forceful character—the reputation of being able to influence the old King in his most truculent moments. He was, moreover, the Minister of Finance in all but name, and he alone knew the financial resources of the country, while his loyalty to the Sharifian dynasty was as unquestionable as had been his previous devotion to the Turkish régime.

Muhammad al Tawil did not shrink from the unpleasant task which circumstances had thrust upon him, and with little time to spare he took the lead in devising a policy calculated to serve the best interests of the country. There was a considerable body of enlightened opinion in the country hostile to the continuance of the Sharifian régime in any form whatever; but Tawil insisted on the deliberations of the national committee being confined to such measures only as might create a favourable impression on the European Powers and induce some or all of them to offer assistance, moral or material, in the country's extremity. Surrender to the Wahhabis was ruled out as unthinkable, and the reputation of the invaders, sedulously propagated by Sharifian circles and seemingly confirmed by the occurrences at Taif, created a real determination in the majority to resist them to the utmost. But the immediate and urgent need of the situation was to remove King Husain from the throne in favour of 'Ali, in order to steady the ship of state before the full blast of the storm broke on it. 'Ali was at Jidda, but declined to consider the proposition, and sought to rejoin his father at Mecca. The gates of the town were, however, shut on him, and he was practically forced to bow to the will of the people. His acceptance secured, Tawil rang up the old King at Mecca on the telephone to suggest his abdication. In reply the King raged and fumed at the traitors who dared thus to insult him in the hour of his need; and he protested violently at the mere suggestion that he should abdicate in favour of his own son. Tawil persisted that there was no other way of saving the country, and the old man at last understood that his course was run. He yielded to the inevitable, and abdicated on October 5th, driving down to Jidda for the last time in a closed car bristling with armed men. He feared, with reason, that his enraged subjects might assault him in revenge for the years of tyranny and outrage they had suffered at his hands. But Tawil maintained a complete mastery of the situation, and a week or so later saw him safely on board the vessel which was to convey him to ‘Aqaba with his family and his possessions, including a prodigious number of boxes full of gold coin. Thus ended the reign of Husain ibn ‘Ali, first King of the Hijaz, after a run of eight years as king and of sixteen years as the lord of the holy cities. No tears were shed at his passing. Islam rejoiced at his fall, which was regarded as no more than just retribution for his original treason in rising at the prompting of ambition against the Lord's anointed. Yet, for all the defects of character, which had left no doubt of his unfitness for the throne that had come to him so unexpectedly in his old age, it can scarcely be denied that he had some qualities of greatness. Virtuous and clean-living beyond challenge, frugal and thrifty even in the midst of plenty, physically and intellectually indefatigable, he was gifted with an intelligence far beyond the ordinary, and he was the very image of majesty. *Omnium consensu capax imperii nisi imperasset,* his virtues were neutralised and transmuted by an egotistical megalomania to which there can surely be few parallels in the annals of the world's worst tyrants.

Meanwhile his eldest son, ʻAli, acclaimed at Jidda as King of the Hijaz, was confronted by an almost hopeless situation. The European Powers with one accord turned a deaf ear to the appeals of the new King and his chief Minister, Muhammad al Tawil, for intervention in the affairs of the Hijaz, and solemnly declared their neutrality in the conflict which had begun in consequence of the long neglect of Husain to follow the advice so freely given him by them. The old treaty, rejected by Husain when offered to him by Lawrence in 1921, was now resurrected and thrown at the feet of Great Britain for acceptance, with any modifications she might desire, but the British Government had no passion for an instrument which in the new circumstances envisaged immediate military intervention. The Hijaz Government was therefore left to fend for itself, and ʻAli hastened to Mecca to study the situation. It was beyond repair, and there could be little hope of defending the city by fighting. He decided accordingly to evacuate it forthwith, in deference to its sacred character, and to concentrate his efforts on the defence of Jidda and the coast and of Madina, which was strongly garrisoned and fortified. He withdrew with the remnant of his troops to Jidda about the middle of October; and almost simultaneously the Wahhabis entered Mecca without opposition for the second time in history. Sultan ibn Bijad set to work, in consultation with the leading men of the city, to create a temporary administration pending the receipt of orders from Ibn Saʻud, who by this time had received the protests of the British Government against the alleged massacre of Taif, and had immediately despatched the most stringent orders to his representative to refrain from any advance in the direction of Jidda until he himself should arrive to direct the operations in person. Thus the only practical effect of the British protest was to prolong the war for more than a year and to increase its death-roll to some 25,000 persons who perished of disease, hunger and thirst during the ensuing siege of Jidda. Meanwhile the Wahhabis, having nothing better to do while awaiting the arrival of their chief, proceeded to demolish the various tombs and other historic places of pilgrim visitation in and around Mecca. Their activities produced a thrill of indignation all over the Muslim world, and particularly in Persia and India; but the Wahhabi apologists stood their ground, and justified the destruction of the scenes of outrageous idolatry by reference to the precepts of the Quran and the Traditions.

Ibn Sa'ud did not arrive in the Hijaz until December 5th, when, for the first time in his life, he entered Mecca in the seamless garments of a pilgrim and performed the customary rites in the Great Mosque. Jidda had profited by the respite to put its defences in order. At the end of October the Wahhabis could have walked into the town without firing a shot; but in the interval considerable numbers of officers and men who had served under Faisal in Syria and 'Abdullah in Trans-Jordan had arrived in search of adventure and occupation. Tahsin Pasha al Faqir, who had served in the Turkish armies during the Balkan War, was selected as the commander of the defence troops, which he had soon organised as a skeleton division, under the boastful title of the "Victory Division" and which at the end of November paraded before the new King, whom Tahsin not only assured of a successful defence of Jidda, but also comforted with visions of an early and triumphant re-entry into Mecca. His right-hand man was a Turkish engineer officer, Naurus Bey by name, who was given special charge of the entrenchments, barbed-wire defences and mines which were rapidly organised in a wide semicircle well outside the walls of the town from sea to sea. At the same time a fresh supply of aeroplanes was ordered to replace the antiquated machines of King Husain, and the original Russian pilots were re-engaged to fly them—one of them had perished at Taif, whither he had been sent to reconnoitre the Wahhabi movements and where his machine had crashed, leaving him an easy victim to the enemy. The outward and visible effect of the military preparations to meet the anticipated Wahhabi attack was admirable; but in fact the troops were ill fed, ill clothed and ill cared for in the sickness which accompanied their trench life; the mines laid in front of the trenches would not explode when tested; the Russian pilots refused to fly low enough to be effective, and their bombs, dropped from a great height, seldom did any damage. To make matters worse, large numbers of the Badawin from the surrounding desert came inside the barbed-wire defences to die of hunger in preference to being butchered by the enemy; and the local water supply was so deficient that the beggars, whose numbers increased as work became scarcer, begged not for money, but for a drink. The charitable stationed tanks outside their doors with servants to dole out the precious liquid to the wretches, who as time went on crawled about the streets on all fours from sheer infirmity, and who might be seen in the neighbourhood of stables greedily collecting the undigested grain from the excrement of horses.

There were wise men in Jidda at this time who deemed that discretion would prove the best part of valour, and who were for jettisoning ‘Ali for a peaceful settlement with the invaders as soon as it became clear that Ibn Sa‘ud insisted on uprooting the Sharifian dynasty from the country. The bolder spirits among them actually entered into correspondence with Sultan ibn Bijad and Khalid ibn Luwai, the Amir of Khurma, who now jointly controlled affairs at Mecca. Some of their letters were intercepted, and three of the leading men of Jidda were arraigned before a court-martial for treasonable intelligence with the enemy, one of them being Qasim Zainal, nephew of the Governor and a former deputy to the Turkish Parliament, as well as being by far the most progressive of the citizens of the town. The three men were duly found guilty on unimpeachable evidence, and they were condemned to death. All eyes were on the King, and the King quailed before the terrible responsibility of deciding whether he could justify their execution by ultimate victory. For all the loud talk of his military advisers, that was at any rate unlikely, and the condemned men were released from prison with a free pardon. It would have been wiser to have required them to quit the country for the time being, but their execution would probably have produced a revolution on the spot. They remained to emphasise the growing weakness of the loyalist cause, and their outspoken criticisms exposed beyond challenge the absurdity of the military organisation.

But Tahsin was incorrigible, and ‘Ali spent his time in listening to wise counsels of inaction, particularly at the moment of Ibn Sa‘ud's arrival at Mecca, and in signing Tahsin's orders of the day for provocative action which could produce nothing but a hardening of the enemy's heart. Aeroplanes were sent out to drop bombs in Wadi Fatima and to hover over Mecca as Ibn Sa‘ud made his entry into the city; and the Wahhabis answered out of the Quran:

"Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the people of the Elephant?" It was now war to the knife, and early in the new year the Wahhabi army appeared before Jidda and the siege began with their first shell on January 6th, 1925. From then on till June the town was besieged on the land side in a desultory fashion, occasional sorties by the defenders being replied to by tentative attacks on the entrenchments, while ever and anon the town was subjected to vigorous but generally innocuous bombardment. Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud had plenty to do in reducing the turbulent Harb tribesmen to some sort of order; and two engagements, one to the south in the direction of the port of Lith and the other at the inland village of 'Usfan, showed this tribe something of the mettle of the Wahhabis. In a short time their submission was complete, and the pacification of the Hijaz spread slowly but surely in ever-widening circles until the ports of Rabigh in the north and of Lith and Qunfidha in the south fell under the sway of the invaders. The possession of Rabigh encouraged Ibn Sa'ud to announce the opening of the route to Mecca for any persons who cared to attempt the pilgrimage. About 3000 pilgrims took advantage of the opening, mostly from India and the adjacent countries, and, though on a small scale, the pilgrimage of 1925 passed off without let or hindrance from the Badawin, and it began to be whispered that in Ibn Sa'ud the Hijaz had at last found its master. An English Muslim happened to be among the pilgrims on this occasion, and in the book which he subsequently published Mr. Eldon Rutter has paid a high tribute to the character and capacity of the Wahhabi ruler. "He is probably," he wrote, "the best ruler that Arabia proper has known since the days of the four Khalifas; and if he keeps his balance in spite of success he may do her much good." Thus the spring and early summer had produced little result in so far as the siege of Jidda was concerned, but the surrounding country had been occupied and brought under effective Wahhabi administration, while the impression had been created that the wild men of the desert were not so unfit to rule as had been imagined. An early result was scarcely likely at Jidda, and Ibn Sa'ud, being himself desirous of attending the pilgrimage and supervising its conduct, raised the siege for the time being, after burning the outlying villages, which had served as *points d'appui* for the besieging troops, and withdrew to devote himself to his religious duties, thus incidentally, and probably quite consciously, following a precedent from the early history of Islam for an armistice during the pilgrimage ceremonies.

It is doubtful whether the killed on both sides during these six months of desultory siege greatly exceeded 200 or 300; but disease and lack of food and water had carried off thousands within the fortified enceinte of Jidda. The Wahhabi withdrawal postponed the collapse of 'Ali's régime, but there was at this time no reasonable doubt of the ultimate result; and the activities of marauding bands of Wahhabis in the northern districts of the Hijaz and near the Trans-Jordan frontier drew the attention of the British Government to the continued presence of King Husain at 'Aqaba, and created some apprehension lest the Wahhabis, by seizing that place, should become a source of disturbance on the southern borders of Palestine. The British Government had categorically declared its neutrality at the very outset of the conflict; and it is not disputed that the districts of Ma'an and 'Aqaba, including the sub-districts of Petra and Shaubak, formed at that time part of the Hijaz. This tract had been conquered by the Arab army of the Hijaz from the Turks in 1917 and the following year, and had ever since been under the effective administration of the Mecca Government. But the British authorities in Palestine had for some years coveted their neighbour's vineyard, and now, in July 1925, they deemed the moment propitious to satisfy their ambition to possess it. The breach of neutrality involved in their project was not allowed to stand in the way of its realisation, and a detachment of the Trans-Jordan gendarmerie was sent down with a number of British armoured cars to occupy the whole tract; while the operation was accompanied by an invitation to King Husain to remove himself to a less dangerous spot. His scruples were countered by an ultimatum, and he was eventually removed, bag and baggage, in a British cruiser to Cyprus, where he has resided ever since. ʻAqaba and Maʻan were annexed to the mandated territory of Trans-Jordan, and to this day they are administered as part of the realm of the Amir ʻAbdullah in spite of the protests of Ibn Saʻud, who claimed, and still claims, that they should be restored to the Hijaz, of which they formed part at the time of the British declaration of neutrality.

This claim and protest were first made within a very few months of the British annexation of the districts concerned, for the British Government, rightly regarding the final success of the Wahhabis as inevitable, decided in the autumn of 1925 that the time had come for discussion with Ibn Saʻud with a view to the demarcation of the frontiers of Trans-Jordan and a general settlement of the various problems outstanding between Great Britain as mandatory for ʻIraq and Palestine and the Wahhabi ruler. Accordingly in November a British mission, headed by General Sir Gilbert Clayton, arrived at Jidda and proceeded to Bahra, halfway between that port and Mecca, where Ibn Sa'ud was encamped preparatory to the resumption of the suspended operations against Jidda. By arrangement with King 'Ali the Bahra area was treated as sacrosanct during the period of the negotiations, but it was clearly understood that Sir G. Clayton's visit was not intended as an act of mediation between the two parties. The discussions proceeded smoothly and rapidly to a satisfactory conclusion in two instruments known respectively as the "Treaty of Bahra" and the "Treaty of Hadda," dealing, the first with tribal raids from and into 'Iraq, and the second with the definition of the Trans-Jordan frontier, which was duly settled except for a gap left on the south for subsequent determination when the parties should be in a position to arrive at a final agreement in the matter of the Ma'an–'Aqaba controversy. The Bahra Treaty elaborated a scheme for the prevention of raids by the tribes on either side of the frontier and for dealing with such cases of aggression as might take place in spite of the precautions prescribed; it was in effect a rider to the Muhammara Treaty of May 5th, 1922, and the 'Uqair Protocols of December 2nd of the same year. As was to be proved by the sequel, the provisions of this series of treaties failed to achieve the results intended by its authors, and, perhaps owing to a divergence of opinion as to the real meaning of some somewhat vague clauses, was destined to create the very situation against which they sought to guard, and to necessitate further discussions, which will claim attention in their proper place. To a lesser extent the same criticism applies to similar provisions embodied, *mutatis mutandis*, in the Hadda Treaty; but the latter disposed definitely of any doubt as regards the actual boundary between Najd and Trans-Jordan, and finally placed the important tract of Wadi Sirhan up to and including the Salt villages in the Wahhabi sphere. The relegation of the Ma‘an–‘Aqaba question for discussion on a more suitable occasion was natural enough in view of the fact that Ibn Sa‘ud could not yet claim to be the undisputed master of the Hijaz. And in general the discussions between Sir Gilbert Clayton and Ibn Sa‘ud achieved the purpose, far more intrinsically important than the mere signing of treaties, of establishing for the first time an atmosphere of friendliness and even cordiality between the Government of Great Britain and the Wahhabi Sultan, whose meteoric though steady progress towards the zenith of his fortunes had been watched from Whitehall with feelings of anxiety and foreboding.

It was not only Whitehall, however, that looked askance on the rapidly maturing victory of the Wahhabis. The destruction of the graves and other memorials of the saints of the Muslim calendar had caused much searching of heart in various Muslim countries, and particularly in Persia and India. And both countries had been impelled just at this moment to despatch missions of inquiry for the purpose of ascertaining the actual acts and probable intentions of the new régime. The Persian mission was an official one under Ghaffar Khan Jalal al Saltana, the then Persian Minister in Egypt, and ‘Ain al Mulk Habibullah Khan Huwaida, the Persian Consul-General at Damascus. Passing, with ‘Ali's permission, through the barbed-wire barrier, they were met at the appointed trysting-place by representatives of the Sultan, and conveyed by motor-car to Mecca, where they faithfully recorded a list of the demolished monuments. ‘Ain al Mulk then went on alone to

Madina to fulfil a similar purpose; and it would seem that the ultimate presentation of their report, accompanied as it was by Ibn Sa'ud's undertaking to restore any building whose rebuilding was demanded by the general voice of Islam, closed down a controversy which had seriously disturbed the Muslim communities of the world, though perhaps in consequence of it the Persian Government withheld its recognition of the Wahhabi régime when established, and maintained that attitude of aloofness, including the discouragement of Persians from undertaking the pilgrimage, until 1929, when once more 'Ain al Mulk revisited the Hijaz on an official mission on behalf of his Government to negotiate a treaty. Persia then accorded its formal recognition of the Wahhabi Government; and 'Ain al Mulk was nominated to the charge of the Persian Legation at Jidda to mark the resumption of diplomatic relations.

The Indian mission was naturally unofficial, and represented the Indian Califate Committee, which, on behalf of the Muslims of India, claimed a voice in the disposal of the Hijaz when Ibn Sa'ud should have completed its conquest. The idea of the Committee was that the holy land should be given a republican constitution and placed under the control of a committee fully representative of the various sections of Islam. That the Sharifian Government had discredited itself was freely admitted, and the Califate Committee held no brief for a dynasty which had usurped the Prophet's mantle without applying for its blessing. But it had not considered the practical administrative effect of its proposal for a Republic; the unruly Badawin of the Hijaz had for centuries defied the Ottoman authorities, with the result that the country was far from safe in those days for the pilgrims whom duty impelled to visit it; with the departure of the Turks they had continued their defiance against the Sharifian Government, with equal success; and latterly only had they met their match in one whose chief claim to distinction in history must ever be his masterly handling of Badawin tribes during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Could a republican system hope to maintain the newly won freedom of the Hijaz from the tribal tyranny of the past? The answer could only be a decided negative; but that was not the answer of Ibn Sa'ud, who replied that he proposed, as soon as possible after the completion of the conquest on which he was engaged, to summon a representative Muslim conference to make suggestions for the future administration of the sacred territory, of which for the moment he considered himself the trustee on behalf of Islam. He was prepared to accept any system which would guarantee the decent government of the country, but for the time being his whole aim and object was to uproot for ever the dynasty which had shown itself utterly unfit for so solemn a charge.

Having thus, with the suave urbanity of the desert, entertained and disposed of the three missions which had, to say the least, chosen a somewhat delicate moment to engage him in conversations, the Wahhabi Sultan turned with relief to the order of the day, which was the reduction of Jidda and Madina, the last strongholds of the old régime. The Prophet's city was at this time being loosely besieged by his lieutenant, Ibrahim al Nashmi, an officer of considerable ability and mild temperament, which showed itself in his special care of the refugee men, women and children who, in rapidly increasing numbers, sought asylum in his war-camp from the starvation which threatened them in the beleaguered city. In association with him was the redoubtable Faisal al

Duwish, with his hordes of Ikhwan from the Harb and Mutair tribes; and at the end of November Ibn Sa'ud reinforced the besieging force with a further 2000 men, under the command of his third son Muhammad, a lad of barely seventeen. Meanwhile the forces at Mecca were being regrouped for another offensive against Jidda, and were strengthened by the arrival of large reinforcements from Najd under Prince Faisal. At the same time the long though ineffectual state of siege was beginning to tell on the defenders of Jidda. Funds were short, and the troops had not received any pay for the last seven or eight months; they were ill provided with food, and signs of incipient mutiny had begun to be apparent, while desertion was dangerously frequent owing to the circulation of a message from Ibn Sa'ud that deserters would be honourably treated on arrival within his lines, whose advanced posts at this time were at Raghama, within sight of the coast. Events now began to happen rapidly. The arrival of the young Muhammad before the walls of Madina had been the signal for the reopening of negotiations, and on December 5th the city surrendered, on the sole condition that Faisal al Duwish and his fanatics should not be allowed within the walls. The news of its fall produced a profound effect at Jidda, and the surrender of Yanbu', the port of Madina, a few days later heralded the end. Ibn Sa'ud had actually started by motor-car for the Jidda front when in Wadi Fatima he was surprised to see a car coming from the opposite direction. This contained the Indian Assistant of the British Agency, which had been desired by 'Ali to initiate negotiations for an armistice. Jidda was ready to surrender if Ibn Sa'ud would undertake the repatriation of the Syrian and other troops of the defending force and pay them part of their unpaid arrears of salary. ‘Ali was to be free to depart, and a committee would take charge during the interval between his actual departure and the arrival of Ibn Sa‘ud, who should undertake not to allow the more fanatical section of his army within the walls of the town. The two cars now proceeded together westward, and Ibn Sa‘ud having agreed in principle to the terms suggested, a further interview with the acting British Agent, Mr. S. R. Jordan, took place for the signing of the formal agreement which was the prelude to the actual surrender of the town. ‘Ali abdicated on December 19th, after a troubled reign of fourteen months, and sailed the same day in a British sloop for Aden, whence he continued his journey *via* Bombay to ‘Iraq, where he has since resided as a private citizen under the protection of his more fortunate brother, Faisal. On December 23rd Ibn Sa‘ud arrived in state at Jidda, to receive the submission of the town and the allegiance of its inhabitants. The war was over. The triumph of the Wahhabis was complete. And the green flag of Wahhabiland fluttered out gaily in the breeze, in company, for the first time in history, with the national banners of a dozen states. "There was a long sighing in Arabia" of rapture and relief, and whispered wonderings of fate's provision for the years to come. But on that day the old Arabia died for ever; and a new state was born into the world's family. Progress would be the watchword of the desert fanatics!

ACT V. PEACE

The story of modern Arabia is nearly ended. Its last phase is a phase of peace and progress, of returning prosperity and steady development on lines strangely modern as seen against the background of Arabian history. In a sense the transition had already begun a generation or more ago with the advent of the high-velocity rifle, which had seriously threatened with extinction one of the most typical products of the country—the Arabian horse, now no longer useful in the desultory warfare of the tribes. The process had been carried a step further with the appearance of the motor-car, which had, however, so far been only timid and tentative, as though in recognition of its startling incongruity in the midst of conditions still undistinguishable from those that obtained in the days of the patriarchs. Otherwise in all respects the old régime ruled unchallenged. The administration of the Turks had been not without some measure of effectiveness, but it had been entirely mediæval in character; that which had followed it—the administration of the Sharifian dynasty—had been nothing but barbarous: a chapter straight out of the dark ages. The forms of the modern world had been mimicked with its kings and courts and ministers, its air services and wireless communications and uniformed armies; but behind this thin veneer it was not difficult to detect the presence of the spirit that stalked abroad in the land—the spirit of reaction, tyranny and corruption. Yet those who were wise in their generation and for nearly a decade had studied the growth of the Wahhabi movement, with its primitive outlook and urgent fanaticism, saw little reason to hope that Arabia would now enter the fold of modern civilisation. They shrugged their shoulders, realising that the régime that had passed away had gone beyond hope of recall, and pretending that at the best Arabia was of little moment in the scheme of the modern world. In that view they were strangely in error, as the events and developments of the next few years would prove.

Meantime the Wahhabi monarch, with the eyes of the whole world upon him, and still saddled with his guests of the Indian Califate Committee delegation spying alike on his ambitions and his actions, was confronted with as grave a problem as he had encountered in all the five and twenty years of his stewardship in Arabia. The Hijaz was now his by right of conquest, but its peculiar status in the Islamic world made it rather a trust than a chattel. What should he do to secure at the same time the approbation of the world, the welfare of the holy land of Islam and his own ascendancy? For the moment he kept his own counsel, while remaining at Jidda to adjust his relations with the European Powers represented by agents and consuls at that port. ‘Abdullah al Damluji, a native of Mosul who had been in the Sultan's service since 1915, at first in the capacity of medical attendant and later as political adviser in virtue of his education at Constantinople, was appointed temporarily as Viceroy of Jidda and Director of Foreign Affairs. ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Ali Ridha, a resident of Jidda and scion of a Persian family which had long since settled in the Hijaz, was confirmed in the post of Qaimmaqam or Governor of the town, which he had held without a break during the reigns of Husain and ‘Ali. The Ikhwan elements of the Wahhabi army were strictly forbidden access to the city, for fear of accidental clashes with the small and indispensable infidel element in its population, European traders and consular representatives. The future water supply of the pilgrim-port was secured by the placing of an order for a new sea-water condenser to replace the old plant which had already seen its best days. And last, but not least, a tentative beginning was made in the direction of improving the transport service in the interests of the pilgrims who were already beginning to arrive from the Dutch East Indies and other places; a concession was given to a group of Arabs and Egyptians for the establishment of a service of motor-cars to ply between Jidda and Mecca and Madina. Thus within the first few weeks of his assuming control in the Hijaz Ibn Sa'ud had given some definite indication of the policy he intended to pursue in the new territory: he would maintain and develop friendly relations with the Powers; he would cater for the comfort of the pilgrims; and he would not eschew the obvious advantages of modern methods of locomotion. European observers, relieved and surprised at such an auspicious beginning, now began to question whether he could impose his manifest will to progress on the wilder and more reactionary spirits which formed the bulk of his subjects.

But the Muslim world was less interested in the new ruler's tendency to material progress than in the all-absorbing question of the future status of the Hijaz, the holy land in whose disposal all Islam claimed a voice, though it had studiously refrained from assisting the conqueror to establish his position. It is, indeed, not improbable that Islamic opinion as a whole somewhat resented the complete success of the Wahhabis, and had hoped rather for a stalemate, which might well have resulted in the fate of the country being submitted to arbitration by a representative assembly. Failing this, Ibn Sa'ud was not left without advice either by the Islamic Press of India, Egypt and other countries, or by the various representatives of non-Arabian Islam who were already in the Hijaz or were flocking to it in their scores and hundreds. He was not the man to scorn advice or to be unduly influenced by its volume and vocality; but the patience of his listening served admirably to cloak the decision which had doubtless already germinated and taken shape in his own mind.

He was, moreover, not the man to encourage the growth of complications by undue dallying with the problems confronting him. Within a fortnight of his arrival in Jidda he was ready with his solution, whose announcement fell upon the world as a bolt from the blue.

On January 8th, 1926, the Great Mosque of Mecca filled to overflowing with the faithful assembled for the Friday prayer, and there was nothing to indicate that the prayer of that day would go down to history as an epoch-making occasion. Yet the service was no sooner over than a procession of the leading citizens of the Hijaz was to be seen making its way towards the spot where the Wahhabi Sultan and his family had sat to pray, and remained in contemplation of the glory of God and his ancient house. And there Ibn Sa‘ud was simply and solemnly acclaimed as King of the Hijaz; and, as the citizens filed past him touching his hand and swearing their allegiance in the traditional terms of the formal Bi‘at, he rose accepting their homage and himself swearing allegiance to the sacred law of God, the holy Shar‘, by which henceforth, with God's help, he would rule his holy land without distinction between rich and poor, great and small. A buzz of wondering and excitement spread through the holy city, and the wires conveyed the glad tidings to Jidda and Madina and to the world beyond. A great searching of hearts ensued among the scattered communities of the world of Islam, but there was also relief that the problem had been solved in such a way as to leave the responsibility for all its consequences on shoulders which by all human reckoning were the strongest to bear it. The Hijaz, at any rate, could now settle down to the future knowing its fate, and the new King, having made his own decision, sent out his greeting to all

Islam with an invitation to all its communities to send their representatives to Mecca at the forthcoming pilgrimage to meet him in formal conference to discuss the future administration of the country in the primary interests of the pilgrims who would frequent it at the bidding of their faith.

The acclamation of the Wahhabi Sultan of Najd and its Dependencies as King of the Hjaz came as a surprise, and something even of a shock, to the European and other Powers represented at Jidda; and the credit of being the first to accord official diplomatic recognition to the new dispensation must be accorded to the Government of the Union of Soviet Republics. Great Britain, France and Holland followed in rapid succession, the first and last of these Powers accompanying their formal announcement of recognition by the despatch of cruisers on a complimentary visit to Jidda, where their guns boomed out a salute to the new King-Sultan. Turkey, Belgium and Switzerland were the next to follow suit, and in 1929 Germany joined the ranks of the recognising Powers, while in the same year the Government of Persia opened up negotiations with the same object in view, after its accordance of recognition to the state of ‘Iraq. Italy and Egypt alone of the states having more than a platonic interest in the Hijaz have so far failed to enter into formal diplomatic relations with Ibn Sa‘ud's Government, the former owing to its special interest in the Yaman, and the latter on account of certain complications arising out of the Mahmal question—problems which will call for special mention in due course.

Ibn Sa‘ud, now securely established in his new rôle, and conscious that the Muslim Congress for which he had issued invitations would hold him to account for all shortcomings of the new dispensation which he had introduced on his own responsibility and without formal consultations with the other Islamic states and communities, threw himself body and soul into the task of cleaning out the Augean stables inherited from the Sharifian dynasty. It was no easy matter, though in one respect his feet were on firm ground. The experience of a quarter of a century had taught him the secret of ruling the unruly Badawin of Najd, while for more than a thousand years it was the tribes of the Hijaz which had been the curse both of its rulers and of the pilgrims. In the opinion of many, the new ruler would here be confronted by a task beyond his powers; in his opinion that was by no means the case, for during the course of the warfare in the Hijaz he had already tried his Najdi methods on the tribes of the holy land, with a measure of success. He now continued the same policy: the contrite were spared and the proud were struck down. In a few months he had interviewed the leading chiefs of all the tribes and secured their acceptance of a scheme which offered them a minimum of official interference with their independence combined with a maximum of personal responsibility for the absolute security of their various spheres. The dark shadow of the Wahhabi army lurking in the background counselled acceptance. The chiefs yielded to the inevitable, and henceforth each tribe and section was made primarily responsible for the peace and security of its own sphere, as well as for the conduct of its immediate neighbours on either side. On the occurrence of any offence the responsible chief should report it and the manner of its punishment to the King himself; should he neither punish nor report, the neighbouring chief should force him to do so on pain of attack; and in the event of the neglect of their duty by both, both would be liable to attack and merciless punishment by the armed forces of the State. The Badawin accepted the scheme, for they recognised a master in their own game; and the scheme worked well. The Wahhabi army was withdrawn from the Hijaz; the fortified posts along the pilgrim routes were abandoned and allowed to fall to ruins; and from that day to this there has been peace in the land—a striking tribute to the personal ascendancy of a master-mind. No pilgrim but has paid his mite of tribute to the new order in the Hijaz, and whatever the future may hold in store for Ibn Sa'ud, it is probable that the recording angel will place in the forefront of his achievements the rapid and complete subjugation of anarchy and unrest in the Hijaz, which has astonished a wider audience than that of the pilgrims. To-day there is perhaps no country in the world with a cleaner crime-sheet and a better record of internal tranquillity than Arabia, while no country can boast so small an annual expenditure on its police. And no diminution of the credit due to the King is involved in the admission that the simple austerity of the Shar' law has acted under his régime as a powerful deterrent to criminals. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is still the firm foundation of Arabian justice. The thief loses his hand and death confronts the adulterer, but such offences are rare in the land; and prohibition is not only prescribed, but effectively enforced, even in the case of the stranger within the gate, for Ibn Sa'ud has ever set his face against anything in the nature of capitulatory privileges, whose unostentatious disappearance has been tacitly acquiesced in by the Powers.

The establishment of security and the enforcement of the law have perhaps presented a less difficult problem to Ibn Sa'ud than the reorganisation of the administration, which had under the old régimes been manifestly saturated with corruption. King Husain had, indeed, always acted on the assumption that the ineradicable dishonesty of all State officials justified a scaling down of salaries; and that assumption had been readily accepted by the officials themselves as justifying the exercise of their skill in securing for themselves a living wage with a reasonable margin against the vicissitudes of fortune. But with the advent of Wahhabi rule this standard of official morality was sternly discouraged. It would be idle to pretend that in this respect Ibn Sa'ud has yet met with the same measure of success as has attended his efforts to grapple with Badawin lawlessness, and his own frequent dismissal of officials of all ranks bears ample testimony to the continuance under his régime of the old attitude towards the funds of the State. Nevertheless, some progress has been made in the right direction, and the pilferer carries on his business at the peril of his employment; indeed the only feature of the present administration which is open to serious criticism is perhaps the prevailing tendency to allow the combination of official functions with private trading. Many of the leading merchants of the Hijaz hold high offices of State, and it is only natural to suppose that they take advantage of their dual capacity for their proper profit. For the moment the problem is well-nigh insoluble, owing to the dearth of suitable trained officials, and it can only be hoped that a new generation will arise to fill the gap which at present can only be filled with persons of capacity, who are only to be found under existing conditions among those who have made their way in business.

As for the forms of government, Ibn Sa'ud has steered a middle course between the primitive and simple régime which sufficed for the administration of Najd and the full-fledged ministries and councils of modern democratic states, such as had commended themselves to the rulers of the Sharifian dynasty not only in the Hijaz, but also in Syria and ʻIraq. Some sort of council was, indeed, necessitated by his own promises to the people of the holy land that they should be permitted and encouraged to play a part in the governance of the country. Moreover, he had to look ahead to occasions when affairs in Najd would demand his personal attention and his consequent periodical absence from the Hijaz. It was, however, important to preserve his own unquestioned control over all the affairs of the State, and this object was achieved by the evolution of a constitution under which the supreme attributes of sovereignty were vested by a convenient fiction in the sacred law itself, the Sharʻ. The King was as absolutely subject to the Sharʻ as the meanest of his subjects, while he in his capacity of Imam—a Calif in all but name—was the supreme embodiment of the law, the supreme magistrate of the State. Subject to this supremacy over all, he was able to divide his realm into the two distinct viceroyalties of the Hijaz on the one hand and Najd and its Dependencies on the other. His eldest son and heir, Saʻud, was appointed Viceroy of the latter, and made responsible for its administration during the absence of his father at Mecca; similarly the second son, Faisal, was appointed Viceroy of the Hijaz. The administration of the latter was further provided for by the establishment of an Executive Council and an elective Advisory Council, while the various administrative departments were grouped for purposes of control under the several members of the former. The administrative frame was thus complete, and every department knew at least to whom it was ultimately responsible, while in the absence of the King, all laws and regulations, as also all decisions on matters of primary importance, were promulgated on the authority of the Executive Council after full consideration of the views of the advisory body. The latter consists of fourteen members, of whom one is the King's nominee as President, while the rest are elected as follows: five by the people of Mecca, three each by Madina and Jidda, and one each by Yanbu‘ and Taif. The Executive Council consists of the Viceroy as President with the portfolios of the premiership and the interior; the nominated President of the Advisory Council as Vice-president without portfolio; the Director (now Minister) of Foreign Affairs who acts independently of the Council and is directly responsible to the King in respect of his department; and the Minister of Finance (who controls all the revenue and accounts departments). All departments not directly under the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance are answerable to the Viceroy, while the military forces of all kinds come directly under the King. These administrative arrangements, while working satisfactorily enough under present conditions, cannot yet be regarded as having settled down in their final shape, and the smallness of the Executive Council is but evidence of the paucity of experienced officials at the disposal of the Wahhabi monarch. This is indeed a crying need of the country, and a great burden of work and responsibility inevitably devolves on the King himself, until the processes of education at home and recruitment outside the borders of Arabia shall have provided him with an efficient staff. As has been mentioned already, the first nominee to the post of Director of Foreign Affairs was Dr. ‘Abdullah al Damluji, a native of Mosul, who for about a year also held the post of Viceroy of Jidda until it was merged in the viceroyalty of the Hijaz. Particularly in all matters concerning the relations of the State with the European Powers, Damluji rendered good service to the King at a moment when the new State was settling down under strange conditions; and at the end of 1926 he accompanied the Amir Faisal on his State visit on behalf of his father to England, France and Holland. He also played a prominent part in the various conferences held in the two following years to adjust the relations between the Wahhabi State and Great Britain; but as time proceeded the work of the Foreign Office proved too great a strain on him, and he was allowed to resign his post in August 1928, and to return to his home in 'Iraq. He was succeeded by his assistant, Fuad Hamza, a young Syrian of great parts, who would seem to be destined to a brilliant career in the service of a country which is still at the threshold of its greatness. The Finance Ministry has from the beginning been held by Shaikh 'Abdullah al Sulaiman, formerly confidential secretary of the King, and a man of pure Najd breeding and upbringing. It is perhaps no slur on him to suggest that his able management of the finances of the Hijaz has astonished his best friends; it is, however, safe to say that no better man could have been found for so exacting and responsible a post. The third figure in the Executive Council is another Najdi who has spent most of his life trading in the Hijaz and was always a staunch champion of the Wahhabi cause and a bold critic of the Sharifian régime, even to the extent of suffering imprisonment for his views. 'Abdullah al Fadhl, nominated President of the Advisory Council, *ex officio* member of the Executive Council and Minister without portfolio, has long been one of the most progressive traders of Jidda, and is the Purveyor-General of all the requirements of the Court, besides being a person of great influence in the counsels of the State. Besides this trio of leading executive officials, mention should also be made of

Shaikh Hafidh Wahba, an able and energetic Egyptian, who some years ago threw in his lot with the Wahhabi monarch, has always played a prominent part in negotiations with the various foreign Powers, and has latterly held the important post of Minister of Education, being thus a fourth wheel in the administrative coach. He has conducted the somewhat delicate negotiations of his master with the Egyptian Government, and it is perhaps not his fault that so far they have only produced negative results. Quite recently he was selected by Ibn Sa'ud to represent his Government at the International Postal Conference in London, and he has recently been designated for the honour of being the first Minister Plenipotentiary of his country at the Court of St. James.

The administrative machine above described naturally took some time to be put together, as the result of deep thought and much experiment, but the sun did not stand still upon Gideon while the necessary details were being evolved. We have already seen that before the completion of the conquest of the Hijaz Ibn Sa'ud had been called upon to conduct certain negotiations with the British Government for the adjustment of various matters outstanding between the two States. These negotiations had not been able to remove from the arena of controversy certain problems of a somewhat delicate character, for the consideration of which the time would come in due course. Sir Gilbert Clayton, the British envoy, concentrated for the moment on merely laying the foundations of a friendly understanding with the Wahhabi monarch, on settling the boundary between Najd and Trans-Jordan so far as that could be done without regard to the frontier of the Hijaz, and on devising a scheme for the settlement of such disputes as might arise between the tribes of Najd and those of ‘Iraq and Trans-Jordan. Having successfully negotiated these matters, he was called upon to attempt a similar task in the Yaman, where a frontier dispute between the Imam Yahya and the British authorities of the Aden Protectorate was liable at any moment to create an ugly situation. The boundary between the two territories had been laid down by agreement between the British and the Turks during the years 1902–5, but the Great War had created a somewhat indeterminate situation on the frontier, and the British had been too busy with other things to worry about the matter. As a consequence of this state of affairs, part of the Aden Protectorate had been for some time in Turkish occupation when the Armistice put an end to hostilities and to all further Turkish interest in the old Arabian provinces. The Imam had then occupied the area previously held by the Turkish troops, and declined to recognise the validity of the Anglo-Turkish frontier; and such was the position when Sir Gilbert Clayton arrived at San‘a to open negotiations with the ruler of the Yaman in the spring of 1926. The latter proved somewhat intractable, and was encouraged in that attitude by certain of his advisers, who could point with some truth to the fact that the Imam owed nothing of his existing territorial position to the goodwill of the British, while they could suggest with good reason that the more accommodating attitude of the Italian authorities in Eritrea (then seeking eagerly for fields for colonial expansion) justified an attempt to drive a hard bargain with the British. It is true that the British Government had after the war sought to reward the Idrisi ruler of lowland ‘Asir for his loyalty by the gift of the important port of Hudaida, when it had been decided to evacuate it after the failure of the Jacob mission to the Imam in 1919. The gift had actually taken effect in the following year, but the Idrisi was not capable of holding the town, which was accordingly occupied without difficulty by the troops of the Imam in 1921, since when the latter's authority had not been challenged. The Imam now sought from the British Government the cession of Dhali‘ and other parts of the Aden Protectorate of which he was in *de facto* possession as a *quid pro quo* for the desired friendly agreement, and it would perhaps have been politic on the part of the British Government to have given up an area which was, and is, of no practical value to it, in return for friendly relations which would have had some moral, if not material value. The British authorities, however, took a different view of the situation, and Sir Gilbert Clayton left San‘a with nothing achieved, while the Imam immediately despatched an invitation to the Italian Government to send an official delegation to reap the fruits of the British failure. This invitation was eagerly accepted, and towards the end of 1926 it was announced that Commendatore Gasparini, the Italian Governor-General of Eritrea, had concluded a treaty of commerce and friendship with the Imam. The latter was recognised as King of the independent sovereign State of the Yaman, and other clauses of the treaty declared the readiness of the Italian Government to assist the newly-recognised State both commercially and politically as might be necessary, and to recognise its existing territorial extent, whatever such a term might mean in practice, for the boundaries of the Yaman were exceedingly vague both on the north and the east, to say nothing of the disputed area along the Aden frontier. It is probable that the Imam expected this treaty to produce an immediate revulsion of British feeling in his favour, and there can be little doubt that he would readily have sacrificed his agreement with Italy for a satisfactory accommodation with Great Britain, as at this time he had reason to feel nervous of the possible expansion of the Wahhabi power southward. The British Government did not, however, rise to the bait, and the Italo-Yamani Treaty fell still-born on a world which was mildly surprised at first but soon began to realise that it could be fruitful of nothing but complications between the Yaman and Italy, unless the latter country abandoned altogether the main motive of the agreement, which was Italian colonisation of a reputedly delectable land facing its Eritrean colony across the inhospitable Red Sea. The new status of the Yaman did not secure the formal recognition of any other Power, while the treaty, though still in being, has produced neither openings for colonisation or exploitation by Italians nor any marked benefit for the Yaman itself. Moreover the mild sensation created by its publication was almost simultaneously discounted by the news that the Wahhabi King of the Hijaz had made a treaty with the Idrisi, under the terms of which the hitherto independent principality of ‘Asir came under Ibn Sa‘ud's control as a protectorate of the Wahhabi State pending its ultimate absorption therein, which the treaty defers till the decease of the present incumbent of the princely throne, Saiyid Husain al Idrisi. The latter had incidentally deposed and succeeded his young and inexperienced nephew, ‘Ali, who had followed his father, Muhammad al Idrisi, on his death in 1922. The designs of the Imam Yahya on the territory of his neighbour were thus somewhat abruptly checked on the very morrow of the Italian agreement, which had seemed to promise him an accession of both moral and material strength, but which did not and could not well contemplate a brush with the strongest prince in all Arabia. And perhaps a more important, though incidental, result of the Wahhabi protectorate over ‘Asir was that the potential oil-fields of the Farisan Islands, recently leased by the Idrisi to the Asiatic Petroleum Company, now passed quite definitely beyond the reach of the Imam's most sanguine dreams. It is true that Ibn Sa‘ud accepted without demur the *fait accompli* of the concession granted by the Idrisi, but when the question of the transfer of its boring operations by the company from one island to another arose in 1928 the Wahhabi ruler insisted on certain modifications in the terms of the original concession, and the inability of the parties to agree on new terms resulted in the abandonment of the enterprise.

The history of the Yaman from this point to the present day has been marked by a certain amount of internal trouble arising out of the activities of the traditionally hostile Zaraniq tribe in the Tihama and by various frontier incidents involving the aerial bombardment of various villages by the Royal Air Force detachment at Aden during the winter of 1928–29. But the relations of the Imam with Ibn Sa‘ud have been formally correct if not altogether cordial, and it was hoped that the former would be able to visit Mecca during the pilgrimage of 1929 as the result of the exchange of friendly sentiments on the occasion of the visit to San‘a of an informal mission sent by the Wahhabi King to discuss various matters of mutual concern. This visit did not in fact materialise; but a son of the Imam was able to pay a visit to Italy to confirm the friendly sentiments expressed in the Gasparini treaty. Meanwhile the difficulties with the Zaraniq have been to some extent solved partly by military operations and partly by diplomacy ; while relations with Great Britain have sufficiently improved to allow of a resumption of negotiations for a treaty or other understanding. But perhaps the most significant event in the recent history of this corner of the Arabian peninsula is the visit paid to the Imam in 1927 by Mr. Charles Crane, the American traveller, diplomat and philanthropist, who subsequently at his own expense sent American engineers to advise and help the Imam in the development of roads and agriculture in his country. The simultaneous provision of a gift of suitable machinery bids fair, perhaps, to stabilise the beginnings of a modernisation of the Yaman, whose great natural resources inevitably encourage high hopes of the process; and Mr. Crane's name may well go down in history as a great and practical benefactor of Arabia. It should also be mentioned, in passing, that during 1929 a semi-official Soviet trading agency was, with the permission of the Imam, established at Hudaida and San'a under the management of Karim Khan Hakimoff, formerly the diplomatic representative of the Soviet Government at Jidda.

So much for the Yaman. We return to Arabia proper, where we left Ibn Sa'ud busily engaged in setting up an administration for the carrying on of the government of the new territory against the coming of the delegates to the Muslim Congress convened by him for the pilgrim-season of 1926. For some years the pilgrimage had been either in abeyance or but meagrely attended, owing to war, rumour of war and the rapacity of the rulers of the country, but the numbers of people who took advantage of the new conditions of Wahhabi rule in spite of much interested propaganda to the contrary were more than satisfactory, and it was estimated that, including the Arab visitors from various parts of the peninsula, no less than 250,000 persons stood on the plain of 'Arafat for the culminating ceremony. About 100,000 of them came from over the seas, including the official delegates of many lands to the great conference, which the King himself inaugurated at Mecca immediately after the completion of the customary religious rites. Every subject of interest to the various communities of the Muslim world was duly reviewed and made the subject of a congressional resolution; but it cannot be said that the meeting of so many delegates really produced any results commensurate with their united representative capacity. And in one respect it produced none whatever, for Ibn Sa‘ud, while cordially inviting suggestions for the betterment of his own dispensations, made it clear from the beginning that he would not trifle with the great responsibility of which he was conscious before God and man for the sake of making obeisance to the doctrinaire clap-trap of so-called democracy and republicanism.

He had in a few months created peace and security in the Hijaz such as had not been known through the ages; he would rule to the best of his capacity for the glory of God and the welfare of the annual visitors to his holy house; and, if anyone had a better scheme to put forward, he was willing to examine it, but he would himself be the judge of its efficacy. Meanwhile he would rule the Hijaz in the common interest of all concerned, and was prepared to accept the fullest responsibility for the consequences. The politically-minded delegates from India, Egypt and other centres found but cold comfort in the *real-politik* of the Wahhabi King, and returned to their homes disappointed and disillusioned. But Ibn Sa‘ud remained master in his own house, free to turn his attention to many matters requiring it both at home and abroad; and one of his first acts was to send a mission of courtesy with his son, the Amir Faisal, at its head to Europe to thank the Governments of Great Britain, France and Holland for their formal recognition of his new status. Socially the mission proved a great success, but the political results achieved by it were insignificant, though a number of problems demanding discussion between the new Arabia and the various European countries were tentatively touched on.

Immediately on the return of the mission the acting British Agent and Consul at Jidda was authorised to start formal negotiations with the Wahhabi King, who was then in camp in the neighbourhood of Madina, with the object of placing the relations between the two countries on a new and comprehensive basis; but these preliminary discussions proved entirely fruitless, and were soon broken off to allow Ibn Sa‘ud to pay a visit to Najd and his desert capital, Riyadh, whence he had then been absent for two full years. This visit gave him a much-needed opportunity of re-establishing touch with the tribal and religious leaders of Central Arabia, who were naturally anxious to have an account not only of his doings, but also of his intentions for the future, for in the wilds of Arabia every good Muslim is very consciously the keeper of the conscience of his neighbour; and even the Sultan had to run the gauntlet of his subjects' suspicions that the conquest of the Hijaz and the consequent realisation of an international position might have cooled his ardour in the service of God. That he managed to persuade his anxious subjects of his unchanged and unchanging devotion is manifest from the fact that in the month of February 1927 a monster gathering of the clans of Najd begged him to assume the title of King of Najd and its Dependencies in order to balance his kingly dignity in the Hijaz. The actual demand was preferred by his own father, the aged Imam ‘Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal, and a decree was accordingly issued announcing the change of the Wahhabi ruler's title to "King of the Hijaz and Najd and its Dependencies."

The affairs of Najd having now been duly attended to, Ibn Sa'ud was once more free to return to the Hijaz to supervise the arrangements for the 1927 pilgrimage. He also had another important call on his attention, in that the British Government, in view of the failure of the preliminary discussions already referred to, had decided to resume negotiations for a comprehensive treaty, and had again nominated Sir Gilbert Clayton as its minister plenipotentiary for the purpose. On this occasion the discussions proceeded without a hitch to a satisfactory ending, and on May 20, 1927, the Treaty of Jidda was duly signed, the formal ratifications of it being exchanged on September 17. It was thus with a clear conscience and an easy mind that Ibn Sa'ud was able to devote himself to the celebration of the pilgrimage ceremonies at the end of May, and it was a happy coincidence that on this occasion the number of pilgrims from overseas constituted a record for modern times. Equally happily, the pilgrimage passed off with an unusually small mortality, owing to the vigorous measures adopted for the improvement of the medical and sanitary arrangements both at Mecca and at Jidda. And the only fly in the ointment was a controversy between the Hijaz and Egyptian Governments, arising out of the latter's claim to the privilege of sending an armed escort with the "holy carpet." The Hijaz Government stood its ground, pointing to its own ability to ensure the safe passage of the Mahmal and the accompanying pilgrims to Mecca; and, no solution being possible in the circumstances, the Egyptian Government recalled the Mahmal. The diplomatic relations of the two countries have in consequence been highly unsatisfactory ever since, as Egypt has declined to recognise the new régime in the Hijaz; but time will surely heal the bitterness of Egypt's first disappointment. The annual Egyptian Mahmal is to-day as much a thing of the past as the Syrian Mahmal had become in consequence of the Great War; and the Ka'ba is now clothed each year with a covering made in the holy city itself by artisans in the employ of the Wahhabi Government.

The Treaty of Jidda was, indeed, an epoch-making event, and for the first time in history Great Britain and Arabia met on equal terms as friendly Powers. By the first article of the treaty, the "complete and absolute independence of the dominions" of Ibn Sa'ud was formally recognised by Great Britain, while the ninth article declared null and void the old agreement made in December 1915, under the terms of which the status of the Wahhabi ruler (then of Najd only) had suffered certain curtailments long felt as derogatory to his *de facto* independence. The rest of the treaty followed the normal lines of such instruments. There should be peace and friendship between the contracting parties, and Ibn Sa'ud undertook to facilitate the performance of the pilgrimage by British Muslim subjects. He also undertook to respect the treaties of Great Britain with various Arab chiefs on the Persian Gulf, while he agreed to co-operate in the suppression of the slave-trade. And, finally, the duration of the treaty was fixed at seven years. There was every reason to hope that for that period, and indeed for a much longer one, the relations of Great Britain and Wahhabi Arabia were secure against disturbance. Yet in the very autumn of the formal exchange of the ratifications of this treaty at Jidda a cloud appeared on the eastern horizon, no bigger than a man's hand, but big with trouble.

For its origins we have to go back to 1922 and the

Protocols of ‘Uqair, which had validated the Treaty of Muhammara of the same year subject to two important stipulations. The wells and pastures on either side of the new frontier, on which Sir Percy Cox had insisted in defiance of Arab tradition, were to remain free for the use of the Badawin tribes subject to both parties in accordance with ancient custom; and it was agreed that no fort or other military building should be constructed by either party at the wells in question. No specific zone was laid down for the operation of these conditions, and no wells were named, but there seems to have been a tacit understanding that the stipulations in question applied, as common sense demands, to the whole area traversed by the frontier-line within which the tribes on either side were traditionally accustomed to range. At any rate, the Wahhabi monarch, in reply to a specific question, appears to have been told by Sir Percy Cox that his intention of building forts on the wells of Lina would be ruled out by the new understanding; and, similarly, the British authorities in ‘Iraq had in 1925 consulted Ibn Sa‘ud as to whether he had any objection to the construction by the ‘Iraq Government of a line of forts along the Najd frontier in the north, to enable it to check the passage of raiding parties from Syria across the narrow corridor separating that country from the Wahhabi realm. The reply was unfavourable to such a proposal, and it was not proceeded with.

It was thus obvious that the construction of forts by either party in the neighbourhood of the frontier would be liable to misapprehension, and should not therefore be undertaken without notice or consultation; yet in the spring or summer of 1927, while Sir Gilbert Clayton was engaged in the negotiation of the Treaty of Jidda, the British authorities in ‘Iraq appear to have given their blessing to a strange scheme for the creation of a series of forts along the north-eastern frontier of Najd. Whether Sir Henry Dobbs, the High Commissioner, who was nearing the end of a very successful period of service in ʻIraq, was caught napping—*quondam dormitat Homerus*—by the proposals of an irresponsible subordinate, or merely committed an error of judgment, cannot yet be determined. The fact is that a party of workmen was at this time sent out to the desert wells of Busaiya, where they were engaged in the construction of a small fort-like building when some Badawin of the Mutair tribe appeared on the scene and promptly proceeded to massacre them for their pains. They had been told by their King, it was afterwards urged in palliation of their crime, that no buildings would ever be permitted at these waterings; but their action in taking the law into their own hands must be condemned as absolutely inexcusable. Its consequences were extremely serious, and for a period of two months or so a most unsatisfactory and alarming state of affairs existed in the frontier districts. *De facto* there was war between Great Britain and the Wahhabi state. British aeroplanes and armoured cars scoured the desert, bombing and bombarding the Badawin wherever they might be found; and the Arab tribes, roused by fanatical propaganda regarding the designs of the infidel against their independence, countered with raids on the territories of ʻIraq and Kuwait. The transgression of the Najd frontier in contravention of the Treaty of Bahra by the Royal Air Force was at the time justified by the British Colonial Secretary in the House of Commons as having arisen out of the Wahhabi King's admission that he had lost control of his own subjects. In fact no such admission had been made either explicitly or by implication; and what Ibn Sa‘ud did say was merely that, if the British authorities persisted in their unjustifiable aggression against his territories, he would accept no responsibility for the consequences.

The Wahhabi King was at this time at Riyadh, where, in spite of the difficulty of communication, he was able to keep close touch with every development of the situation. While the aeroplanes and armoured cars were attacking the tribes it was idle to counsel the latter to be patient. They would defend themselves and their encampments; and they would counter-attack the enemy as far as possible. There was therefore only one thing for him to do, and it was he who took the initiative in demanding of the British Government the immediate stoppage of all military action and the transference of the dispute to the calmer atmosphere of the council-chamber. To this proposal the British Government readily agreed, nominating Sir Gilbert Clayton as its plenipotentiary once more to negotiate a settlement with Ibn Sa‘ud. A truce on the frontier put an end to all warlike activities on both sides pending the proposed diplomatic discussions; and the only infringement of the armistice was committed by the Royal Air Force towards the end of April, within a few days of Sir Gilbert Clayton's arrival at Jidda. For some reason which was never explained in spite of the formal protest entered by the Wahhabi Government, an aerial attack was made against a Badawin encampment in the neighbourhood of Hazil, and one of the machines taking part in it, forced to land in Najd territory, was burned and abandoned where it lay after the rescue of its occupants, the damage sustained by it being too great to be rapidly repaired. The incident was probably due to an error of judgment on the part of some subordinate officer acting on a false alarm.

Ibn Sa'ud and Sir Gilbert Clayton met as old and cordial friends, but there was little time for a full discussion of the problem before them in view of the near approach of the date of the pilgrimage, at which the Wahhabi King's attendance was indispensable. The scope of the negotiations was not restricted to the single point of the recent incidents on the frontier; and to deal with the various matters still outstanding between the Wahhabi state on the one hand and the British, 'Iraq and Trans-Jordan Governments on the other, Sir Gilbert Clayton had representatives of the two latter with him. Much useful work was got through during the short time available, by the setting up of sub-committees, and a very substantial measure of agreement was achieved on a number of subsidiary issues. But it was clear from the beginning that the only serious crux of the situation was the question of the forts which had occasioned the trouble. The issue was whether they should remain or be demolished, and, as no immediate prospect of a decision seemed likely, it was agreed that Sir Gilbert Clayton should return to London to consult his Government, and that meanwhile the truce should continue. On his departure Ibn Sa'ud devoted himself to the pilgrimage and matters of domestic politics in the Hijaz until the return of the British envoy at the beginning of August. The second meeting of the parties was short, inconclusive and unsatisfactory. The British Government was prepared to meet the King on all points except one, and that one was the vital one, acceptance of which by Ibn Sa'ud was made a condition of the realisation of the others. He refused, as had been inevitable from the beginning; and Sir Gilbert Clayton returned to England to report the failure of his mission, while the King posted off to Najd with an imposing caravan of motor-cars to tackle the trouble that was only awaiting the result of the negotiations to burst upon him.

The Busaiya incident and the subsequent aerial activity had served to fan into flame the ever-ready fanaticism of the desert; and it is important to remember that the cause for which the tribes were ready to rise as one man was the King's own cause. His grievance against Great Britain was the same as the grievance of his subjects; and the rising of the tribes was not in the beginning, as was suggested in some quarters, a rising against their ruler. They rose merely to offer their services for an attack on the infidel, a term which, in the parlance of the Ikhwan, included the people of 'Iraq; and it was with pardonable suspicion that they regarded the King's proposal to settle the controversy by diplomacy rather than in arms. Nevertheless, he had been able to convince them of his hopes of a satisfactory outcome of his peaceful method; and he was frank enough to set a reasonable time-limit for the realisation of those hopes. That limit had now been reached unsuccessfully, and he well knew that the Ikhwan leaders would not fail to make such capital as there was to be made out of his discomfiture. At the same time, he knew that war with 'Iraq meant disaster, and he had made up his mind that no such war should take place, even if he had to use violence against his own subjects to stop it. The ring-leaders among the Ikhwan at this time were Faisal al Duwish and Sultan ibn Bijad, the chiefs of the Mutair and 'Ataiba tribes respectively; while Dhaidan ibn Hithlain (and after his death his son Naif) of the 'Ajman was another potentially hostile element to be reckoned with. All these, and some others, were big men in the desert scheme; and all of them had played some part, greater or less, in the advancement of the Wahhabi cause to imperial rank. Ibn Sa'ud had no desire to deal with them otherwise than generously, but he could not afford to concede to them any decisive voice in the policy to be pursued. On the other hand, the democratic system of Arabia demanded their consultation and gave them the right of speaking out their mind even if it did not accord with the King's.

The national assembly convened by Ibn Sa'ud at Riyadh after the breakdown of the final negotiations at Jidda gave both king and subject an opportunity of clearing the ground of many obstacles to the steady political and economic progress so necessary to the consolidation and stabilisation of the position won by the struggles of thirty years. The tribal leaders above mentioned did not actually attend the congress in person, but sent their sons or other relatives to represent them by proxy; and in other respects the assembly was representative of all the secular and religious elements in the population of Najd. The actual proceedings do not call for detailed discussion, though the medieval atmosphere of the greater part of the prolonged debates provides ample material for the study of the life and manners of the Wahhabi Arabs of the twentieth century. One of the points fully discussed, for instance, was the (religious) lawfulness or otherwise of the use of wireless communication and of other modern conveniences; and, after the opposition had urged its case against wireless telegraphy as being sorcery, and therefore the work of the devil, and therefore unlawful, the King and his supporters argued against so narrow an outlook, and appealed to the 'Ulama for a ruling as to whether the sacred literature—the final resort in all such cases—contained anything interpretable as a prohibition of wireless communication. The 'Ulama, conscious of a grave responsibility, replied in the negative, and the case was won and lost. Other matters of a purely religious character were fully threshed out in company with the problems of modern politics; and perhaps the most important positive result of the congress was the endorsement of the King's policy of peace and friendship with his neighbours. The King's personality was, of course, the dominating feature of the proceedings, and his lavish hospitality to the many thousands of the assembled delegates contributed to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and goodwill. The only fly in the ointment was the absence of certain chiefs whose endorsement of the decisions arrived at would have given them the added value of unanimity. Failing their specific support, the King could proceed with his policy with a clear conscience on the basis of formal resolutions duly sanctioned after the manner of the desert.

The attitude of Faisal al Duwish and his fellows in recalcitrance was not long in declaring itself, and was probably in part dictated by fear for their personal safety in view of their past records. In the more fanatical Ikhwan colonies they found some support for a policy of rebellion; and in due course they went out into the wilderness in arms against their King, while the latter began to move out his legions to teach them the lesson of their lives. The campaign, conducted in the desultory manner of the Badawin, and consisting largely of negotiations with the rebels, whom Ibn Sa'ud had no desire to injure, though he was adamant in his demand for their unconditional surrender for trial before the religious courts—incidentally those courts could only have convicted them and sentenced them to death for high treason, though they could then appeal to the royal prerogative of mercy—dragged on through four months of the spring of 1929, and involved an expenditure of £40,000 from the treasury. The climax came in March, when the various detachments of the army, each under a son or brother of the King, converged from different directions on the plain of Sibila between Zilfi and Artawiya, in which the rebels, under Faisal al Duwish and Sultan ibn Bijad, had concentrated in an entrenched camp. A final summons to surrender was disregarded, and the King gave the signal for a general advance. This seems to have been carried out very slowly and deliberately, the enemy fire not being returned until the troops were within easy charging distance. Then the end came rapidly enough in a hand-to-hand encounter, in which the rebels were hopelessly outnumbered and cut down in hundreds. Faisal's son, Bandar, was among the dead; and Faisal himself was carried off the field to Artawiya apparently mortally wounded; while Sultan ibn Bijad fled with the few other survivors, though only to surrender shortly after and to be sent to Riyadh, where he still languishes in prison with many of his chief lieutenants. Ibn Sa'ud now sent a message demanding the immediate surrender of Faisal himself, and began to march on Artawiya to give point to his demand. At some distance from the town he was met by a procession of Faisal's wives and children begging that he be at least left alone to die in peace, being stricken beyond all hope of recovery. The request was refused and Faisal was duly brought out to the camp on a stretcher; and the King, erring always on the side of leniency, gave the dying chief a free pardon. The trouble was to all appearances at an end. The King returned as soon as possible to the Hijaz for the pilgrimage, leaving the task of dealing with certain elements guilty of complicity in the recent rising to his brother, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul Rahman, who, among other actions, visited the important Ikhwan colony of Ghatghat and razed it to the ground for the delinquencies of Sultan ibn Bijad and his ‘Ataiba following. By the early summer of 1929 the prospects of long peace in Najd seemed promising enough.

Unfortunately, however, Faisal al Duwish did not die; and the King's sojourn at Mecca, where his presence was urgently required for the solution of various important administrative and political problems, had to be abruptly curtailed on the arrival of news that the rebel leader, having made a slow but complete recovery from his wounds, was again about to take the field for an attack on the ‘Iraq frontier. The question of the forts had not yet been disposed of between Great Britain and Ibn Sa‘ud, though the latter had, early in the year, suggested its reference to arbitration for final settlement. And there could be no question that, while it remained unsettled, it would always be a potential source of disturbance among the Badawin of the Najd frontier tract. In July the King set out once more for Central Arabia with a caravan of over 200 motor-cars, having meanwhile set in train negotiations for the purchase of four aeroplanes in England and for the engagement of British pilots to fly them. These machines arrived on the Hasa coast towards the end of the year, by which time the King had also made considerable progress with a scheme for a comprehensive chain of wireless stations to link up the various important centres of his far-flung dominions. For thirty years he had made his way through all the difficulties inherent in an empire so large, so arid and so sparsely populated, despite the lack of effective communications; but no one has realised so clearly that the future of that empire can only be assured in the hands of those who will succeed him by the adoption of modern methods of communication. Already with the motor-car much progress had been made in the desired direction, and the motor-car has proved its capacity to cope with Arabian conditions; but now, at the dawn of the fourth decade of the century and of Ibn Sa'ud's own reign, a further advance is assured by the aeroplane, and the extension of wireless communications, hitherto known only in the Hijaz, to the desert itself.

On his return to Najd the King found that an unfortunate accident had precipitated an outburst, which had indeed been inevitable from the moment of Duwish's recovery. Faisal himself was, however, not the prime cause of this outbreak, which had developed in the Hasa, where the ever-suspect 'Ajman had necessitated the attention of the governor, 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi. The latter had during the summer sent his son, Fahad, with a small force to watch the movements of the 'Ajman, who were suspected of evil intentions against the frontiers of 'Iraq and Kuwait. Their chief, Dhaidan ibn Hithlain, promptly visited Fahad to explain matters, and the latter had deemed it advisable to detain him for the time being pending further inquiries. He had, however, at Dhaidan's suggestion, allowed the chief to send a message to his own people informing them that he was remaining there for a short time and that there was no ground for anxiety on his account. The messenger, starting at dusk, managed to lose his way in the dark and missed the 'Ajman camp. The tribesmen, disturbed at the tarrying of their chief, started off in force to inquire the reason of his delay, and arrived in the neighbourhood of Fahad's camp about midnight. Their arrival suggested treachery and danger; and Fahad, acting hastily, ordered the immediate execution of Dhaidan and those with him as guests in the camp. The order was carried out, but certain loyalist elements of the same tribe who had long been in the service of the King and were at the time with Fahad, were so horrified at what appeared to them a crime against the laws of hospitality that they deserted to Dhaidan's men, who immediately opened fire on the camp. Fahad was killed by a stray bullet, and the matter was for the moment composed, but the 'Ajman soon declared for open rebellion, and found a ready ally in Faisal al Duwish, who was already looking for support. Such was the origin of the new trouble, which Ibn Sa'ud found himself called upon to deal with on his return to Najd.

Meanwhile 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi had been so affected by the tragic death of his eldest son that he seems to have temporarily lost his reason. The King accordingly sent down his son and heir, Sa'ud, nominally as commander of the punitive force to deal with the 'Ajman, but actually to take temporary charge of the administration of the province as well. The desert was now in a state of turmoil. There was no organised rising this time against the King, but Faisal and Naif ibn Hithlain (nicknamed Abul Kilab), the new leader of the 'Ajman, took desperately to a policy of general raiding and brigandage. The frontier tract of 'Iraq and Kuwait was chosen as the scene of their activities, and there is little doubt that they received a certain amount of covert support in those territories from elements willing enough to see Ibn Sa'ud in difficulties. The latter was certainly embarrassed by the necessity of maintaining a continual hue and cry after small robber bands; but he was never at any time faced with an organised revolt, as earlier in the year, and his operations proceeded in ever-narrowing circles, until the back of the movement was broken. The eldest son of Faisal, 'Abdul 'Aziz by name, figured in the biggest of these raids, leading a force of 700 men to attack a loyal Badawin encampment in the neighbourhood of Hazil, whence they were returning with their booty when they were ambushed by the King's troops. 'Abdul 'Aziz and his whole party were killed with the exception of only two men, who escaped to tell the tale; and Faisal, having now sacrificed two sons in his rebellion, was deeply affected by the news. But he redoubled his efforts to keep the movement alive; and the only other important incident in the operations took place shortly after at the wells of Wafra in the eastern desert, Duwish himself being present with a following of Mutair and 'Ajman. After a stubborn fight the rebels were decisively defeated, and Faisal was reported among the dead; but this proved to be untrue. He was now, however, little more than a hunted fugitive in the wilderness; and in November the King took the field in person to round up the last remnants of sedition, which had concentrated in the neighbourhood of the Kuwait and 'Iraq frontiers in the hope of escaping across them in the last resort. The only serious aspect of the situation was the fact that Shaikh Ahmad ibn Jabir of Kuwait, delighted with so providential an opportunity of reviving the depressed economic fortunes of his little principality by providing supplies to the rebels, seemed inclined to offer them asylum and protection in the event of their entering his territory. In such a case Ibn Sa'ud would have considered himself free to pursue them and might well have been forced by circumstances to occupy the town of Kuwait itself at the risk of serious complications with Great Britain as its protector. His insistent representations to the British Government, however, produced the desired result in the form of a definite guarantee that the rebels would on no account be allowed to enter British-controlled territory. The plight of Duwish and his friends now became hopeless, and during the last days of 1929—the British Government having meanwhile given signal proof of its confidence in the Wahhabi régime by raising its Agency and Consulate at Jidda to the rank of a Legation—Ibn Sa'ud attacked and decisively defeated the last gathering of the rebels at Sha'ib 'Auja near Riqai in the Batin valley, the trijunction point of the frontiers of Najd, 'Iraq, and Kuwait. At this critical juncture the British guarantee already mentioned unaccountably broke down, and the rebel leaders—Faisal al Duwish, Naif ibn Hithlain, Ibn Lami of the Mutair and Ibn Mashhur of the Ruwala—fled across the frontier and were promptly disarmed and detained by the British authorities pending discussion of their future in connection with a vigorous protest addressed by Ibn Sa'ud to the British Government and his insistent demand for their immediate extradition. For a moment the situation looked very serious, but suddenly the clouds lifted. By the end of January 1930 Duwish and his fellow-rebels had surrendered to their sovereign; and the stage was set for an event of supreme importance in the history of Arabia, nothing less indeed than a personal meeting between the Wahhabi King and his neighbour, King Faisal of 'Iraq. The significance of the occasion was enhanced by the British decision that the meeting of the monarchs should be attended by Sir Francis Humphrys, the new High Commissioner for 'Iraq who had succeeded Sir Gilbert Clayton on the latter's premature death on the very threshold of success in a task to which he had devoted all his energy and good-will during the last few years of his life. Out of evil cometh good. The rebellion of Duwish has paved the way to the reconciliation of the rival dynasties of Arabia. The two kings met in February on board a British sloop in the Persian Gulf and a treaty between

'Iraq and Najd was initialled at Baghdad on March 10th.

It will be seen from what has been said above what far-reaching effects have ensued from an apparently trivial action—namely, the construction of an insignificant frontier fort in alleged contravention of a solemn treaty engagement. It was not so much the breach of a treaty that roused the Badawin, perhaps, as the threat to their immemorial independence implied by such an innovation imposed on them by an alien Power known to have vast imperial commitments and supposed (not altogether groundlessly at the time) to harbour extensive imperialistic designs based on oil and the development of aviation. The fact remains that the action of the British Government—for the responsibility of the 'Iraq Government in the matter is merely technical, and cannot be taken very seriously—has stirred up a veritable hornet's nest in the desert; and there can be little doubt that, if the natural consequences of such an act had been properly appreciated at the time, the fort of Busaiya would never have been built. Arabia has therefore suffered two years of turmoil for an easily avoidable mistake which has brought no compensating advantage to the British Empire—a tragedy of errors which urgently demands undoing, whether by arbitration or by the reconsideration of the whole matter, by a British Government which has in clear tones disclaimed the arrogant imperialism of its predecessor. The Arabian problems confronting Great Britain are but a tiny part of its world-wide preoccupations, but the friendship of the Arab peoples is well worth securing against the unforeseeable vicissitudes of the future, and the price to be paid for it is insignificant in the extreme. A part of it is obviously the restoration of the *status quo ante* Busaiya; and the balance is represented by the much-to-be-desired settlement of a number of other problems regarding which it will not be out of place to offer a few comments in bringing the history of modern Arabia to a close.

The Hadda treaty of 1925 left the northern frontier of the Hijaz for subsequent discussion and settlement between the contracting parties, owing to the unwillingness of Ibn Sa'ud to accept the *fait accompli* of the annexation, in July 1925, by the British authorities of the northernmost district of the Hijaz (including Ma'an, 'Aqaba, Wadi Musa and Shaubak) to their mandatory area of Palestine-Trans-Jordan. The problem still remains unsolved, and therefore a source of active irritation not only to Arabia, but to the larger world of Islam, which resents the occupation of a part of the territory of the Hijaz by a non-Muslim Power. The annexation of this tract was made, as already stated, in spite of a British declaration of neutrality in the war between the Wahhabis and the Sharifian dynasty; and the time has surely arrived for the serious reconsideration of the matter on the merits of the case and independently of any strategic and economic interests of Great Britain. The problem is easily susceptible of settlement by arbitration, but arbitration scarcely seems to be called for when the facts of the case and the advantages of stabilising British friendship with the strongest single power in the Arabian peninsula point so manifestly to the same conclusion.

Another problem of infinitely greater difficulty and complexity is intimately connected with this matter of Ma'an-'Aqaba—namely, that of the Hijaz Railway. The *de facto* situation as regards this line of communication, morally rather than materially important, at the end of 1929 was that the line had been divided as the result of the post-War settlements into four sections—namely, that of Syria under French control, those of Palestine and Trans-Jordan under British control, and finally that of the Hijaz under the control of the Government of that country. The last-named section has, however, been out of commission since the War, owing to the fact that all the material assets of the railway as a whole had, during the final operations of the War, been concentrated in the territories which were subsequently allotted to Great Britain and France as mandatories. No part or parcel of those assets has ever been made over to the Hijaz, whose section of the line has therefore remained derelict for want of the means of repairing and using it. The ideal solution open to all the parties interested in the matter is obviously that the four sections of the line should be reunited into the whole that it formed at its inception, and handed over to a Muslim Board of Control, working as a limited liability company independently of the governments of the four countries over which it spreads, though of course in due submission to their secular laws. But such a solution is perhaps too ideal to commend itself to the sympathetic consideration of Great Britain and France; and it must be freely admitted that there are practical difficulties in the way which merit serious reflection by those who wish in all honesty to see the line restored to its original status as a religious concern. A middle way must therefore be sought, and the one that most naturally suggests itself is that there should be a valuation of all the existing assets of the line and a just distribution thereof among the four sections on the basis of kilometric or other reasonable considerations. The Hijaz Government would undoubtedly find itself in something of a quandary if confronted by such an offer, as it could scarcely put its seal to any arrangement conflicting with the Waqf laws applicable to the railway; but, assuming the restoration above suggested of the Ma‘an-‘Aqaba district to Hijaz sovereignty, the material assets of the railway might easily be placed in store at Ma‘an station to become automatically the property of the Hijaz authorities on their taking over the administration of that locality. Under present conditions this would seem to be the only practical solution open to those concerned of a problem which defies settlement on its merits so long as Great Britain and France retain their present responsibility for the territories under their mandate; and such a solution would have the merit of opening the Madina market to the grain and other products of Syria, Palestine and Trans-Jordan.

Taken as a whole, the outstanding problems of mutual concern to Great Britain and Arabia are simple and straightforward enough, and will be found to present but little serious difficulty if considered without the imperialistic bias which since the War has coloured British dealings with the affairs of the Arab world. The position has recently undergone a material change in consequence of the categorical declaration of the British Labour Government, which took office in the summer of 1929, that it will recommend the admission of ‘Iraq into the League of Nations, and thus confer full sovereign status on that country, in 1932. That declaration has undoubtedly created a very favourable impression throughout the Arab world and indeed throughout the East; but one consideration arising therefrom has not been sufficiently stressed, and that is the very obvious danger to ‘Iraq itself of independence and consequent responsibility for its own defence while its hinterland is seething with resentment at its current frontier policy. The same consideration applies ultimately to Trans-

Jordan; and the British Government would do well to settle all outstanding accounts with the Wahhabi Power by way of preparation of the ground for the application of an enlightened policy, which on its own merits cannot be too highly commended. The Great War has worked a revolution in the whole spirit of the East, and it is none too soon for British policy to reflect a recognition of so momentous a change.

As regards the Yaman, where desultory negotiations have during the last few years preceded, accompanied and followed equally desultory manifestations of military activity, the British Government has yet to take the step in advance which seems but the inevitable corollary of its general Eastern policy. Aden, with the narrow strip of mainland necessary for its bare existence, must, of course, remain as it is, and needs no discussion. But the rest of the hinterland, including the protected Sultanate of Lahj and the tribes subsidised to be a turbulent buffer between British Aden and Arab Yaman, is of no vital interest to Great Britain, and should be thrown back on Arab sovereignty as soon as possible. The natural allegiance of these elements is to the ruler of the Yaman, who is, indeed, the only potentate in those parts likely to be capable of ruling them firmly and accepting responsibility for their extravagances; and, as things are in south-west Arabia, the best policy for Great Britain is undoubtedly to work in harmony with a ruler of established importance without incurring either an actual or a moral responsibility for maintaining him on his throne in the event of its being shaken in the future. The ultimate possibility of a clash between the Imam Yahya and Ibn Sa‘ud cannot be ignored, but Britain's sole interest is to maintain friendly relations with both rulers, without any obligation to intervene in their quarrels. A subsidiary interest is, of course, to secure the adoption of a similar policy of neutrality by other Powers interested in this part of the peninsula, notably Italy, whose Government appears of late to have abandoned the dreams of colonisation which once inspired its interest in the rich highlands of the Yaman.

A brief review of the strange galaxy of semi-independent principalities under some form or other of British control extending along two sides of the peninsula from Aden to Kuwait must serve as an epilogue to the stirring romance of Arabian history. The historical development of these petty states has been briefly sketched in these pages; and it now remains to consider to what extent the conditions of the modern world demand or justify the perpetuation of such anomalies. To some extent history supplies an answer in pointing to the no longer existent reasons for their original emergence, the outcome of the once profitable activities of the slave-merchant and the gun-runner. And for the rest British policy itself, as expressed in the promises made by Sir Henry MacMahon to the Sharif of Mecca in 1915, constitutes a tacit admission that the time has come for Britain to hand on the torch, so long and so brilliantly borne by her sons in the service of peace and civilisation, to Arab runners. Those promises envisaged the termination of British political control of all the Arab states facing out from Arabian shores to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and the vague possibility of their ultimate unification in a federal Arabia; and therefore by implication they envisaged the possibility of a united Arabia if its peoples willed such union or came to it by other paths.

To-day the possibility and desirability of Arabian unity can scarcely be gainsaid, though they have arisen out of conditions very different from those so fondly imagined by the early dreamers. The Sharifian bulwarks they built round the desert spaces in their minds' eye have proved to be no more than castles in Spain; and it is the unknown and little-liked Wahhabi of those days who rules the greater part of the peninsula with an iron hand and a mighty will to progress. It is the Wahhabi, if anyone, who will guide Arabia into the unity that alone can make her a Power in the world's scheme; and there is nothing can prevent the realisation of that ideal except only—Great Britain.

A heavy responsibility lies therefore on British statesmen of to-day. Arabia can never be truly great while a foreign Power, materially strong beyond the possibility of serious challenge, occupies almost every gateway leading out from its deserts into the world and implicitly encourages centrifugal tendencies on the part of small groups whose real interests, both economic and political, demand closer union with the heart of Arabia and with a ruler who is not only the greatest Arab of his day, but stands out in the Arab world as no individual ruler has done since the days of the orthodox Califs. It is in close co-operation with Ibn Sa'ud, and with him alone, that Great Britain may now make her final and perhaps permanent contribution to the awakening of Arabia from her sleep of long centuries, and thus crown the great work with which she has so long been identified. And, with a Labour Government in power, the auspices cannot but be regarded as favourable for the progressive transference to Arab shoulders of a part of what, under the conditions of the pre-War world, we were proud to regard as the "white man's burden."

The same process is already actively at work elsewhere—in Egypt and India, for instance, where it involves a degree of generosity and self-denial surely unprecedented in all the world's history from the beginning of time. Its application to the Arabian coastlands necessitates no such sacrifice of material interests, while the continuance of British support for the artificial and accidental divisions of the Arab world will but produce on a larger scale the results we already see exemplified in the rapid decay of Kuwait, once the chief port of entry of the considerable trade of Central Arabia. In the days when Najd had no ports, Kuwait flourished, as it continued to do up to and during the War, when, with the Hasa ports under his control, Ibn Sa'ud proposed an arrangement for the just division of the Customs duties levied by the Shaikh of Kuwait on imports destined for the interior. The political relations of the two states were, however, at that time too unsatisfactory for any agreement on such a matter, and the British authorities, responsible for Kuwait, did not attempt to save it from its own folly. The result was the wholesale diversion of the import trade to the Hasa ports and the consequent decline of all commercial activity at Kuwait, whose population has dwindled rapidly during the decade which has elapsed since the Armistice, and whose sole *raison d'être* under present conditions is the maintenance of a political independence which appeals more to its rulers than to their subjects. It will perhaps not be long before Bahrain, already shorn of all but the shadow of political sovereignty, follows Kuwait on the downward path of commercial decline, when Ibn Sa'ud's scheme for a deep-water harbour on the Hasa coast materialises. And the same arguments apply with equal or greater force to all the petty states of the Trucial Coast, whose hinterland, and therefore trade, cannot but be increasingly at the mercy of the great Power which controls the Badawin of the interior. All these elements, from Kuwait inclusive to the Oman frontier, would unquestionably profit by the exchange of their present nominal independence for union with Wahhabi Arabia. As for Oman itself, the authority of the ruling Sultan scarcely extends beyond sight of the coast, where also it would scarcely be effective but for the practical control of his administration by the representatives of the British Government; while the interior is in the hands of independent groups, and to a large extent, actually and traditionally, under Wahhabi influence. Yet until recently British policy has concentrated mainly on the well-nigh impossible task of welding the discordant elements of the Oman promontory into a single political entity, going even to the length of bombarding and threatening the Ja'lan tribe of Sur, strongly Wahhabi in its outlook, to accept the sovereignty of the ruler of Masqat, whose weakness is as patent to the tribesmen as it is to the British Government, which has relieved him of all actual concern with the administration. Whatever may be the fate of Masqat itself and the narrow strip of territory necessary for its independent existence, there can be little doubt that the greater part of its hinterland must gradually sink back into its old dependence on the Wahhabi power. And the same may be prophesied as the ultimate fate of the Hadhramaut tract, which may, however, first be absorbed by the Yaman, with which it is connected by geographical affinities and the memory of a very ancient association.

The territories at present under British and French mandates being excluded from consideration, it is difficult to envisage the future of Arabia otherwise than under Wahhabi auspices, with the final consummation of its union under Wahhabi rule dependent on the result of an almost inevitable and epoch-making conflict between Ibn Sa'ud and the ruler of the Yaman in the near or not very distant future. The ultimate triumph of the former can scarcely be doubted in the light of the lessons of the past quarter of a century; and those who would peer into the future can but see the Wahhabi King dominant, as none of his predecessors ever was, over the whole length and breadth of the Arabian peninsula, and wearing on his head the triple diadem of Mecca, Riyadh and San'a, encircled by a wreath of British and European goodwill.

If any Arab ruler since the Prophet ever merited the proud but simple title of Calif, 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn 'Abdul Rahman ibn Sa'ud is assuredly such an one. Yet he covets not the title, though in many respects qualified to hold it with distinction, either for himself or his heirs; and the office itself he regards as having long been in *de facto* abeyance since the spread of European domination over many Muslim communities and lands centuries before the formal abolition of the Califate by the Turkish Republican Government in 1924. The Prophet's mantle may only be worn by him who can defend and protect the Prophet's people the world over; and such a task is beyond the modest capacity of the Wahhabi King, who is content to be ruler of the Arabs, keeper of God's House on earth in the holy city of Mecca and defender of the true faith in the land of its birth.

APPENDIX

GENEALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF SA‘UD

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
Muhammad	Sa‘ud (d. 1747)	Mishari	Hasan	Muhammad					
				‘Abdul Rahman	Mishari (*a*)				
		Farhan	‘Abdullah						
			Sa‘ud						
			Mijrin	Ibrahim	Sa‘ud				
		Thunaian	Ibrahim	Thunaian	(9) ***‘Abdullah***	Muhammad			
					(1841–43)	‘Abdullah			
						Thunaian	Ahmad (d. 1921)		
							Sa‘ud		
							Faisal		
							‘Abdul Qadir		
							‘Abdul Rahman		
			‘Abdullah	Nasir	Faisal				
				Suhaitan	Fahad				
			Yusuf	Muhammad					
		(1) ***Muhammad***	Faisal (d. 1747)						
		(1747–65)	Sa‘ud (d. 1747)						
			‘Ali (d. 1770)						
			(2) ***‘Abdul ‘Aziz***	(3) ***Sa‘ud***	(4) ***‘Abdullah***	Sa‘d			
			(1765–1803)		(1814–18)	Sa‘ud			
						Muhammad			
					Faisal				
					Nasir	Faisal	Nasir		
					Turki	Mishari			
					Ibrahim				
					Sa‘d				
					Fahad				
					(5) ***Mishari***				
					(1820)				
					‘Abdul Rahman				
					‘Umar				
					Hasan				
					(8) ***Khalid***	Mishari			
			‘Abdullah	Zaid	(1837–41)				
				Muhammad					
				Ibrahim	‘Abdullah				
				(6) ***Turki***	‘Abdullah (*c*)	Nasir			
				(1821–34)	Jiluwi	Muhammad			
						Sa‘ud			
						Fahad			
						Mishari			
						‘Abdul ‘Aziz			
						Musa‘id	‘Abdul ‘Aziz		
						‘Abdullah	Fahad (d. 1929)		
							Sa‘ud		
							Nasir		
							‘Abdul ‘Aziz		
							‘Abdul Muhsin		
							Muhammad		

(1834–37 and 1843–67)	(10) *'Abdullah* (1867–69 and 1877–85) (11) *Sa'ud* (1869–77)	Turki Muhammad (d. 1886)	Sa'ud Salman	'Abdul 'Aziz Muhammad ?
		'Abdul 'Aziz	Turki 'Abdullah Sa'ud	Sultan Muhammad
			Faisal Muhammad Mishari	
		Sa'd (d. 1886)	Faisal Fahad	
		'Abdullah (d. 1886)	Turki Sa'ud	'Abdullah Muhammad
	'Abdul Rahman (*b*) (d. 1928)	(12) *'Abdul 'Aziz* (1900–)	Turki (d. 1919) Sa'ud	Faisal Fahad Sultan 'Abdullah
			Faisal Fahad (d. 1919)	
			Muhammad Khalid Sa'd (d. 1919) Nasir Sa'd Fahad Mansur 'Abdullah Bandar Musa'id 'Abdul Muhsin Sultan Mash'al 'Abdul Rahman	Fahad
		Muhammad	Khalid Fahad Sa'ud 'Abdullah 'Abdul 'Aziz Faisal Bandar	Fahad
		'Abdullah	Faisal	
		Sa'ud	Muhammad 'Abdullah Faisal	'Abdullah
		Sa'd (d. 1916)	Faisal Fahad Sa'ud	
		Ahmad		
		Musa'id		

Note.—Names in italics are those of actual rulers, whose order of accession is indicated by the numbers in brackets before their names and whose periods of rule are shown in brackets below. This table has been prepared from all available sources but cannot pretend to be absolutely complete.

(*a*) Mishari headed revolts against Turki in 1827 and 1834, and usurped the throne for a brief space on each occasion, though he can scarcely be reckoned among the rulers of Najd.

(*b*) 'Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal held Riyadh for a short period in 1890.

(*c*) 'Abdullah ibn Turki held Riyadh against Sa'ud for a few weeks in 1871.

INDEX

'Abadilah (Clan of Ashraf), 112
Abal Khail, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, 193, 199, 200, 201
—— ——, Muhanna, *q.v.*
—— Lisan, *q.v.*
'Abbas Hilmi Pasha, Khedive, 213
'Abda (section of Shammar), 130, 132
'Abdullah, Sharif, *q.v.*
'Abdul 'Aziz al Duwish, *q.v.*
—— —— —— Hasin, Shaikh, 23, 50
—— —— (Governor of Buraida), 117
—— —— ibn Jiluwi, *q.v.*
—— —— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— ——, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— Ghani ibn Hilal, 23
—— Hamid, Sultan, 183, 184, 195, 211, 214, 215
'Abdullah al Damluji, *q.v.*
—— —— Fadhl, *q.v.*
—— —— Sulaiman, *q.v.*
—— 'Ali Ridha, 322
—— ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, *q.v.*
—— —— Dughaithir, *q.v.*
—— —— Hasan, *q.v.*
—— —— Husain, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Ibrahim al Najdi (al Madani), Shaikh, 8
—— —— Jiluwi, *q.v.*
—— —— Muhammad al 'Aun, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sabah, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— —— Suwailim, *q.v.*
—— —— Thunaian, *q.v.*
—— Pasha (of Damascus), 82, 83, 86, 87
—— —— (of Yaman), 208, 209
'Abdul Majid, Sultan, 115
—— —— Effendi, Sultan, 297
—— Muhsin ibn 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
'Abdul Mu'in, Sharif, *q.v.*
'Abdul Muttalib, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— Rahman ibn Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— —— —— Suwailim, *q.v.*
—— Wahhab, 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn, 51
—— ——, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul Latif ibn, 154
—— —— ibn Hasan, 2
—— —— —— Sulaiman, 8
—— ——, Muhammad ibn, xix, 1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 29, 32, 41, 42, 47, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 85, 154, 223
—— ——, Sulaiman ibn, 9, 32
Abha, 216, 217, 218, 276
'Abidin Bey, 97
Abu Jifan, *q.v.*
Abul Kilab, nickname of Naif ibn Hithlain, *q.v.*
Abyssinia, 209
Acre, 75
'Adana, 240, 245, 247
Aden, 2, 3, 116, 123, 126, 207, 208, 217, 240, 260, 261, 320, 333, 334, 336, 359, 360
Adultery, xix, 11, 327
'Adwa, 53
'Adwan, 293
Aeroplanes, 261, 289, 299, 300, 302, 310, 311, 321, 336, 343, 344, 346, 350, 351, 355
'Affaisan, Ibrahim ibn, 63, 64, 65, 66
——, Sulaiman ibn, 32, 40, 47
Aflaj province, 40, 173, 220
Africa, East, 110, 121, 122, 249
Agencies, British Political, 124, 164, 165, 185, 231, 271, 319, 320, 322, 339, 354
Agreement, *see* Treaty.
Agriculture, 27, 224, 225, 226, 227, 337
Ahmad al Idris, *q.v.*
—— —— Sudairi, 142, 175, 221
—— ibn Hanbal, *q.v.*

Ahmad ibn Sabah, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'id, *q.v.*
—— —— ——, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Suwailim, *q.v.*
—— —— Thani, *q.v.*
—— —— Thunaian, *q.v.*
—— of Bareli, Saiyid, 110
—— Pasha, 95
'Aidh family, 27.
——, Muhammad ibn, 205
'Ain al Mulk Habibullah Khan Huwaida, 316, 317
—— —— Saiyid, 169
—— Najm, *q.v.*
'Aja, Jabal, 282
'Ajaimi ibn Sa'dun, *q.v.*
'Ajlan, 172
'Ajman (port on Persian Gulf), 110
—— tribe, 115, 144, 141, 156, 170, 203, 222, 228, 257, 346, 351, 352, 353
'Ajmaniya, Sha'ib, 67
'Alaiyan family, 30, 31, 118, 148, 190
Aleppo, 89, 92, 243, 245, 246
Alexandretta, 242
Algerian, 146
'Ali al Idrisi, *q.v.*
——, Balad Bani Bu, 111
——, Bani Bu, 111
—— family (Shammar), 130, 132
—— ibn Ahmad, 65
—— —— Husain, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Jaushan, 36
—— —— Mahdi, Imam, 205
—— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— —— Sulaim, *q.v.*
——, Imam, 84
——, 'Isa ibn, 112
——, —— —— Muhammad ibn, 130, 131, 132
——, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Muhsin ibn, 130, 133
—— Pasha, 77, 86, 89
—— ——, Sharif, *q.v.*
——, Salih ibn, 108
——, —— —— 'Abdul Muhsin ibn, 131, 132
—— tribe, Al ibn, 163
Allenby, General Sir E. (now Lord), 254, 266
Alms, 71, 72, 208
'Amair, Jazirat al, 70
'Amarat (section of 'Anaza), 108, 203, 204
America (United States), 121, 260, 265, 273, 274, 292, 337
Amin Rihani, ix, 227
'Amman, 284, 285, 287, 289, 295, 296, 300
'Ammariya, 14
'Amr (section of Harb), Bani, 61
'Amran, 66
Amulet, 136
'Amur (section of Dawasir), 46
'Anaiza, 22, 36, 40, 47, 99, 112, 118, 135, 142, 145, 148, 150, 154, 155, 176, 177, 178, 187, 189, 191, 194, 196, 200
'Anaza tribe, 6, 7, 25, 35, 36, 43, 98, 108, 117, 198, 290
Angora, 296, 298
'Aqab ibn 'Ajil, 277
'Aqaba, 93, 231, 236, 240, 253, 266, 295, 299, 307, 313, 314, 315, 316, 356, 357
'Aqailan al Rawaq, 72
'Aqaili, 115
Arab Bureau, 248, 249, 255
Arab party, Young, *q.v.*
'Arafat, 337
'Arai'ar, 'Abdul Muhsin ibn, 41, 44, 49, 58
——, Barrak ibn 'Abdul Muhsin ibn, 59, 62, 65, 69
——, Bazi' ibn, 147, 148
——, Butaiyin ibn, 30, 32
——, Duwaihis ibn, 44, 62
—— dynasty, 59, 61, 62, 143, 144
——, Majid ibn, 106
——, Muhammad ibn, 62
——, —— —— Sa'dun ibn, 59
——, Prince of Hasa, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 29, 30, 31
——, Sa'dun ibn, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 49
——, Saif ibn Sa'dun ibn, 62
——, Zaid ibn, 49
——, —— —— Sa'dun ibn, 61
'Araif ('Arafa), 177, 202, 204, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 227, 228, 229
Arbitration, 122, 123, 163, 258, 267, 315, 323, 350, 355, 356
'Aridh province, 155
'Arish, Abu ('Asir), 115
'Arma plateau, 22, 229
Armistice, 261, 302, 313, 319, 333, 344, 362
Armoured cars, 289, 314, 343, 344

Arms, 66, 136, 167, 171, 185, 218, 225, 230, 231, 234, 247, 256, 263, 267, 277, 280, 340, 360
'Arqa, 24, 25, 219
Artawiya, 225, 226, 227, 349
Artillery, 21, 35, 43, 52, 68, 69, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 111, 124, 146, 165, 168, 186, 187, 188, 230, 233, 251, 258, 269, 270, 282
'Arwa, 151
Asceticism, 9
Ashraf (plural of Sharif, *q.v.*)
Asiatic Petroleum Company, 336
'Asir province, 27, 39, 70, 81, 82, 87, 95, 112, 115, 126, 205, 216, 217, 236, 239, 250, 262, 276, 333, 335, 336
Asyah district, 191
'Atban (section of 'Anaza), 25, 49, 59, 60, 65, 80, 91, 104, 110
'Ataiba tribe, 73, 81, 98, 117, 145, 150, 151, 176, 187, 200, 217, 219, 304, 346, 350
'Ataj, Hafar al, 69
'Auda, 22
'Auja, Sha'ib, 354
'Aun al Rafiq, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— ibn Madhi, 37
Austria, 115
Aviation (Royal Air Force, etc.), *see* Aeroplanes.
'Ayaina, xix, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 67, 71, 105, 106
'Azzan ibn Qais ibn Hamud (of Oman), 124, 125, 164

Badawin, 29, 36, 43, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 57, 59, 64, 68, 72, 73, 90, 93, 94, 98, 111, 116, 129, 134, 144, 148, 157, 171, 178, 183, 191, 193, 213, 214, 215, 216, 219, 222, 223, 258, 259, 268, 269, 291, 303, 310, 312, 317, 318, 326, 327, 328, 342, 343, 344, 348, 350, 352, 355, 362
Badr (Hijaz), 93
—— ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'id, *q.v.*
Baghdad, 8, 26, 28, 43, 68, 86, 89, 94, 128, 130, 135, 140, 142, 144, 145, 147, 214, 243, 245, 246, 256, 257, 269, 272, 277, 280, 282, 354
Bahra, 251, 315
——, Treaty of, 215, 343
Bahrain, 4, 26, 80, 85, 86, 90, 91, 104, 105, 110, 113, 115, 121, 125, 127, 142, 144, 158, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 169, 185, 191, 230, 232, 261, 272, 292, 362
Bairaq, *see* Flag.
Bairut, 245, 246, 247, 274
Bajil, 262
Balfour Declaration, 238, 260
Balkan, 232
—— War, 309
Ballad, 137, 196
Bandar 'Abbas, 79, 80, 91, 125
—— al Duwish, *q.v.*
—— ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
Baqa'a (near Hail), 282
Barakat (clan of Ashraf), 3
Barqa, 79, 90
Barrak ibn 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
—— —— Zaid, *q.v.*
Barzan fort (Hail), 133, 136, 139, 140
Basidu, 111
Basra, 8, 26, 39, 43, 68, 75, 77, 81, 86, 89, 107, 147, 148, 157, 164, 165, 169, 194, 195, 204, 228, 231, 243, 245, 280
Bassam family, 177
——, Qasr, 51, 52
"Bassein," the, 79
Batin valley, 49, 171, 354
Battaliya (Hasa), 61
Belgium, 325
Bell, Gertrude, 161, 263, 277
Berlin, 249
Bi'at ceremony, 48, 324
Bida', Qasr al, 35, 36
Bijad, Sultan ibn, 304, 305, 308, 311, 346, 349, 350
Bisha, 70, 72, 74, 218
Bishr, 'Uthman ibn 'Abdullah ibn, x
Blackmail, 83, 214
Black Mountain, 110
Blockade, 120, 234, 235, 250, 256, 257, 278
Blood-feud, 112, 139, 225
Blunt, W. S., and Lady Anne, 161
Bogle, Surgeon, 80
Bombardment, 98, 99, 124, 146, 163, 187, 188, 249, 250, 251, 261, 282, 312, 336, 343, 363
Bombay, 79, 91, 92, 320
Boundaries, 81, 208, 239, 240, 242, 243, 258, 261, 264, 268, 271, 276, 280, 286, 287, 290, 291, 314, 316, 332, 333, 334, 342, 354, 356
Boyle, Captain W. E. D., 253

Britain (British), 2, 10, 26, 75, 79, 80, 86, 90, 91, 94, 103, 104, 105, 109, 110, 111, 113, 115, 116, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 144, 157, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 179, 180, 184, 185, 186, 203, 208, 217, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 251, 252, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 284, 285, 286, 287, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 308, 309, 312, 313, 314, 316, 320, 325, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 338, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 350, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364
British-Indian, 111, 124, 168, 271
—— Steam Navigation Company, 185
Brussels Conference, 167
Bukairiya, 186, 187, 189, 194
Bulaidat al Fida, *q.v.*
Buqum tribe, 63, 73
Buraida, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 43, 44, 99, 117, 118, 145, 148, 150, 154, 155, 178, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 199, 200, 201
Buraima, 82, 90
Burton, Sir R. F., 125, 161
Busaiya, 343, 346, 355
Busar, 186
Bushire, 26, 79, 94, 168
Butain plain, 99
Butaiyin ibn 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
"Butcher," Ahmad the, 75

Cairo, 215, 236, 238, 284
—— Conference, 279, 285
Califate (Calif, Khalifa), 2, 27, 28, 38, 55, 88, 102, 183, 207, 209, 239, 240, 241, 247, 248, 249, 297, 298, 301, 303, 329, 364
—— Committee, Indian, 317, 322
Califs, The Orthodox, 312, 361
Camel, 39, 53, 59, 63, 65, 70, 73, 92, 137, 138, 139, 141, 171, 292, 303
Canning, Lord, 122
Cape route, 1
Capitulations, 241, 297, 327
Caravan, 39, 81, 82, 83, 89, 90, 108, 130, 137, 138, 141, 154, 188, 197, 277
Carmathian, 6, 58
Cholera, 187, 188
Christian (Christianity), xv, xvii, xviii, 8, 245, 267, 297
Churchill, Winston, 279, 280, 284
Clayton, Sir G. F., 315, 316, 332, 333, 334, 340, 342, 344, 345, 354
Coaling-depot, 163, 166, 168, 184
Coffee, 3, 27, 88, 172
Colonial Office, 279, 294, 300, 343
Colonies, Ikhwan, *q.v.*
Colonisation, 333, 335, 360
Commissioner, Civil, 269
——, High, 248, 251, 275, 276, 282, 285, 292, 295, 343, 354
Commons, House of, 165, 343
Companions (of the Prophet), 5
Concessions, 166, 168, 169, 217, 240, 299, 323, 336
Condenser, Sea-water, 322
Constantinople, 38, 96, 97, 102, 125, 148, 170, 204, 208, 211, 214, 249, 254, 322
Consul (Consulate, etc.), 2, 111, 126, 163, 165, 166, 167, 212, 213, 316, 322
Council, Advisory, 329, 330, 331
——, Executive, 329, 330, 331
Courts, Religious, *see* Shar'.
Covenant, League, 262
Covent Garden, 265
Cox, Sir P. Z., 179, 233, 234, 255, 256, 275, 279, 280, 286, 287, 290, 291, 342
Crane, C. R., ix, 273, 337
"Creepers," 46
Crown, British, 111, 122, 123
Ctesiphon, 245
Curzon, Lord, 162, 185, 267, 268, 269, 271
Customs agreements (duty, etc.), 121, 122, 163, 306, 362
Cyprus, 314

Dahamisha (section of 'Anaza), 117, 290
Dahham, Dawwas ibn, 24
—— ibn Dawwas, *q.v.*
——, Sa'dun ibn, 24
Dahna, 20, 34, 44, 69, 170, 194
Dam, 52

Damascus, 1, 8, 28, 82, 86, 87, 89, 113, 128, 184, 214, 235, 243, 247, 262, 274, 275, 287, 316
Damluji. Dr. 'Abdullah al, 322, 330
Danish scientific mission, 26
Dar'iya, 5, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 38, 41, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 56, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69, 81, 82, 84, 85, 96, 97, 99, 100, 103, 106, 107, 109, 131
Daujan (of Jauf), 288
"Daula" (Ottoman Government), 230
Daumat al Jandal, *see* Jauf.
Dawasir tribe, 40, 45, 46, 65, 221
——, Wadi, 41, 45, 46, 47, 52, 74, 173
Dawwas, 7, 13
——, Dahham ibn, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 29, 31
—— ibn Dahham, *q.v.*
——, Muhammad ibn, 13
Delhi Darbar, 185
Democracy, 48, 328, 338, 347
Dervishes, 297
Dhab'iya, 30
Dhafir tribe, 16, 17, 19, 20, 35, 43, 63, 68, 69, 138, 139, 140, 222, 290
Dhahira district (Oman), 82
Dhaidan ibn Hithlain, *q.v.*
Dhali' (Aden), 334
Dhari ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
Dharma, 16, 17, 31, 99, 150
Dharrar ibn al Azwar, 5
Dhawi Zaid, *q.v.*
Dhuwaibi, Nahis al, 193
Dijani wells, 48
Dilam, 17, 19, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40, 67, 112, 113, 174
Dobbs, Sir Henry, 343
Dollar (Maria Theresa), *see* Riyal.
Domes (on tombs), 23, 24
Doughty, C. M., 136, 140, 141, 145, 161
Downing Street, 167
Du'an, 217
Dughaithir, 'Abdullah ibn, 13
Duraibi, Rashid al, 30, 31
Dutch (Holland), 2, 26, 80, 325, 331, 339
—— East Indies, *q.v.*
Duwaihis ibn 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
Duwish, 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Faisal al, 352, 353
Duwish, Bandar ibn Faisal al, 349
——, Faisal al (1), 107, 108
——, —— —— (2), 192, 193, 199, 228, 279, 281, 282, 319, 346, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354
——, Husain al, 51
——, Muhammad al, 113
Dynamiting, 253

East India Company, 2, 91
——," "Villages of the, 61, 65, 66
Egypt (Egyptian), xvi, 2, 8, 75, 88, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 106, 108, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 119, 120, 131, 132, 133, 152, 213, 214, 235, 236, 237, 240, 248, 251, 252, 255, 256, 259, 272, 316, 323, 325, 332, 338, 340, 341, 361
Engineers, 309, 337
Eritrea, 333, 334, 335
Euphrates, 77, 81, 89, 130, 140, 186, 280
Europe (European), xvii, 1, 3, 4, 26, 27, 68, 75, 79, 99, 105, 126, 143, 160, 164, 168, 180, 213, 232, 243, 259, 265, 266, 274, 276, 286, 297, 301, 306, 308, 322, 323, 325, 330, 338, 339, 364
Exeter, 1
Exploration, xvii, 26, 105, 119, 213, 231
Extradition, 354

Fadhl, 'Abdullah al, 331
Fahad ibn Hadhdhal, *q.v.*
—— —— Jilu'wi, *q.v.*
—— —— Mu'ammar, *q.v.*
Fahhad ibn Rakhis, 153
Faid, 28
Faisal al Duwish, *q.v.*
—— ibn Husain, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'id, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
Faizi Pasha, Ahmad, 186, 189, 190, 207, 208, 210, 211
Fakhri Pasha, 253
Falih ibn Sa'dun, *q.v.*
Famine, 22, 37, 38, 39, 40, 147, 176, 202, 203, 207, 209
Fanaticism, 9, 19, 27, 40, 53, 55, 75, 77, 102, 111, 128, 129, 180, 181, 223, 248, 264, 289, 319, 320, 343, 221, 346, 348

Fao, 232
Fara' province, 40
Farhan ibn Sa'ud, *q.v.*
Faris, Zamil ibn, 13
Farisan Islands, 336
Farraj (shaikh of Subai'), 70
Fasting, 71, 72, 194
Fath 'Ali Shah (of Persia), 90
Fatima, Wadi, 311, 319
Fatimite dynasty, 2
Fawwaz ibn Muhammad, 32
Fida, Bulaidat al, 5
Firuz, Ibn (poet), 68
Flag, 44, 48, 79, 91, 103, 121, 131, 167, 221, 237, 288, 320
Floods, 66, 67
Foreign Office, British, 76, 110, 241, 242, 267
"Fox," H.M.S., 250
France (French), 2, 79, 80, 86, 99, 111, 115, 121, 123, 166, 167, 168, 184, 185, 213, 238, 243, 244, 246, 247, 260, 262, 273, 274, 275, 284, 285, 287, 325, 331, 339, 356, 357, 358, 363
Frere, Sir Bartle, 165
Fuad Hamza, 331
Fudhul, 49

Gallipoli, 246
Gallus, Aelius, xvii
Gasparini, Commendatore, 334, 336
Germany (German), 161, 166, 170, 184, 214, 231, 232, 238, 239, 242, 249, 250, 325
Ghaffar Khan Jalal al Saltana, 316
Ghaffari dynasty, 26
Ghafiri sect, 164
Ghalib Pasha, 251, 269
——, Sharif, *q.v.*
Ghaliya (chieftainess of Buqum), 96
Ghannam, Shaikh Husain ibn, x, 4, 10, 74
Ghatghat, 350
Ghazlan, Al, *see* Muhammad ibn Sa'ud.
Ghubaira, Wadi, 5
Ghuraibiya, 204
Ghuraimil, 49
Ghuta (Damascus), 89
Graves, 71, 83, 88, 98, 309, 316
Greeks, 296
Guano, 122
Gun-running, *see* Arms.

Hadda mountain, 305
——, Treaty of, 315, 356
Hadhdhal, Fahad ibn, 203
——, Mash'an ibn Mughailat ibn, 108
Hadhramaut, 92, 261, 363
Hadi ibn Qarmala, *q.v.*
Hafar al 'Ataj, 69
—— —— Batin, 49, 171, 173, 174, 175, 222
Hafidh Wahba, Shaikh, 332
Hague, The, 185
Haifa, 274
Hail, 28, 109, 113, 118, 127, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 142, 145, 152, 153, 173, 175, 177, 186, 189, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 231, 258, 263, 278, 279, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 292
Hailstorms, 22, 67
Hair, 14, 17, 20, 21, 22, 30, 31
Haisiya pass, 99
Hajir tribe, Bani, 50, 63, 64, 65
Hakimoff, Karim Khan, 337
Hali point, 82, 83, 275
Hama, 243
Hamad al 'Uzaini, 32
—— ibn Husain, *q.v.*
—— —— Mu'ammar, *q.v.*
—— —— Muhammad ibn Manis, 15
—— —— Muwaisnir, *q.v.*
Hamada plain, 150, 151
Hamdh, 48
Hamid ibn Sa'id, *q.v.*
Hamra, 252
Hamud ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Rubai'an, *q.v.*
—— —— Subhan, *q.v.*
—— —— Thamir, *q.v.*
Hanabija (section of Dawasir), 46
Hanafi, 23, 72
Hanakiya, 96, 98
Hanbal, Ahmad ibn, 55, 72
Hanbali sect, 8, 24, 113
Hanifa, Wadi, 5, 12, 20, 21, 66, 67, 99, 100
Haradh wells, 47, 171
Haram (Mecca mosque), 112, 250, 309, 324
Harb tribe, 61, 70, 81, 87, 94, 98, 112, 133, 150, 176, 191, 193, 217, 249, 289, 303, 312, 319
"Hardinge," H.M.S., 250

Hariq, 30, 40, 107, 156, 201, 202, 219, 220
—— (Nubian slave), 82
Harma, 33, 34
Hasa ports, 120, 126, 362
—— province, 4, 7, 8, 11, 18, 19, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 34, 40, 41, 44, 47, 49, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 77, 80, 97, 106, 108, 110, 113, 115, 119, 120, 126, 131, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 152, 155, 161, 162, 171, 180, 195, 221, 222, 229, 230, 231, 257, 272, 275, 287, 350, 351, 362
Hasan, 'Abdullah ibn, 30, 31, 32, 33
—— al Bijadi, 33
—— —— Muhanna, *q.v.*
—— ibn Hibbatallah, 20, 29, 31
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— —— Sha'lan, *q.v.*
—— Tahsin Pasha, 212
Hassan Kashif, 98
Hauran, 146
Hauta, 18, 32, 35, 67, 112, 156, 220, 221
Hawala tribe, 26, 80
Hazil wells, 344, 353
Hazzani (Hazazina) clan, 202, 220, 221
Heresy, 23, 24, 51, 53, 58, 59, 68, 81, 83
Hijaz (Hijazi), 2, 3, 8, 22, 23, 27, 39, 50, 52, 57, 63, 64, 70, 73, 80, 83, 85, 87, 88, 95, 96, 97, 100, 104, 105, 108, 111, 112, 113, 115, 117, 118, 125, 126, 128, 130, 133, 137, 184, 205, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 219, 237, 248, 249, 250, 251, 253, 254, 256, 257, 258, 262, 263, 266, 268, 269, 271, 272, 276, 284, 291, 295, 298, 301, 302, 303, 304, 308, 309, 312, 313, 314, 316, 317, 318, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 331, 332, 338, 339, 340, 341, 345, 349, 351, 356, 357, 358
—— Railway, 184, 214, 215, 234, 236, 252, 295, 300, 356, 357, 358
Hijra, The, 93
Hilaliya, 23
Hilla ('Iraq), 86
Himyarites, xvi
Hinawi sect, 164
Hindi (section of Yam), 65
Hithlain, Dhaidan ibn, 346, 351, 352
——, Naif ibn Dhaidan ibn, 346, 352, 354
Holland, *see* Dutch.
Holy Cities (Places), 23, 27, 28, 83, 87, 88, 95, 205, 214, 243, 271, 301, 307, 317, 318, 322, 323, 324, 326, 329, 341, 364
—— War (*Jihad*), 30, 58, 72, 110, 239
Homburg hats, 248
Homs, 243
Hormuz, 1, 2
Horses, 39, 48, 59, 70, 135, 139, 177, 220, 321
Hospitality, Arab, 41, 194, 225, 229, 284, 348, 351, 352
Huber, Charles, 161, 213
Hudaida, 116, 207, 208, 210, 261, 262, 333, 337
Hufuf, 19, 47, 49, 59, 60, 61, 62, 66, 103, 115, 142, 148, 229
Hujailan (governor of Buraida), 36, 37, 43, 44, 61
Humphrys, Sir Francis, 354
Hunaiya, 40
Huraimala, 15, 17, 18, 32, 67
Husain al Duwish, *q.v.*
—— —— Idrisi, *q.v.*
—— Bey Dhahir, 107
——, Hamad ibn, 13
—— Hilmi Pasha, 208
—— ibn 'Ali (pirate chief), 91
—— —— ——, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— 'Aun, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Ghannam, *q.v.*
—— —— Jarrad, 176
—— —— Mubairik, *q.v.*
——, Muhammad ibn, 13
—— of Abu 'Arish, Sharif, 115, 116
——, Tomb of Imam, 81
Huwail (section of Dawasir), 52

Ibadhiya sect, 110
Ibrahim ibn 'Affaisan, *q.v.*
—— —— Nashmi, *q.v.*
—— —— Subhan, *q.v.*
—— Pasha, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 114
—— —— mosque (Hufuf), 229, 230
Iconoclasm, 45, 75
Idols, 45, 54, 59. 309
Idris, Ahmad al, 216
Idrisi, 'Ali al, 335
—— family, 216, 217, 218
——, Husain al, 335, 336
——, Muhammad al, 216, 217, 218, 228, 239, 261, 276, 333, 334, 335

Idrisi, Mustafa al, 218
"Ignorance," The, 6, 12
Ikhwan, 225, 226, 264, 279, 289, 319, 322, 346, 348, 349
Imam, 3, 24, 36, 55, 78, 79, 84, 88, 116, 126, 205, 206, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 216, 217, 261, 262, 263, 329, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 359
Imperialism, 1, 2, 4, 29, 42, 57, 58, 75, 85, 88, 96, 114, 120, 123, 129, 142, 143, 144, 159, 162, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 214, 215, 227, 255, 259, 262, 263, 265, 266, 302, 346, 350, 355, 358
Independence, 4, 54, 93, 115, 117, 118, 119, 121, 123, 126, 127, 128, 129, 133, 134, 143, 145, 169, 204, 210, 212, 220, 227, 228, 229, 237, 239, 240, 242, 243, 251, 261, 262, 263, 285, 293, 326, 334, 335, 341, 343, 355, 358, 360, 362, 363
India (Indian), 1, 78, 79, 92, 104, 109, 110, 111, 122, 123, 125, 165, 213, 235, 236, 237, 245, 309, 312, 316, 317, 319, 323, 338, 361
——, Government of, 94, 105, 235, 236, 239, 244, 245, 248
—— Office, 267
Indian Ocean, 2, 92, 240, 261, 360
Indies, Dutch East, 322
Indo-European Telegraph, 184
Infidel, 24, 46, 57, 71, 93, 343, 346
Inta', 59, 60
Intercession, 23, 24, 71, 83
'Iraq (Mesopotamia), 6, 26, 39, 41, 43, 57, 63, 68, 70, 77, 80, 81, 86, 87, 89, 92, 95, 106, 108, 130, 137, 142, 143, 157, 169, 176, 186, 195, 201, 203, 204, 222, 224, 233, 235, 236, 244, 245, 246, 248, 255, 256, 257, 259, 267, 269, 274, 275, 276, 279, 280, 281, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 290, 291, 292, 293, 298, 300, 304, 314, 315, 320, 325, 329, 331, 333, 342, 343, 345, 346, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 358
Irrigation, 225
'Isa ibn 'Ali, *q.v.*
—— —— Khalifa, *q.v.*
—— —— Qasim, Shaikh, 13, 51
Islam (Islamic), xviii, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 23, 24, 27, 33, 44, 45, 47, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 62, 65, 71, 72, 75, 81, 88, 95, 102, 105, 135, 205, 214, 228, 239, 245, 248, 249, 250, 266, 297, 298, 301, 303, 307, 309, 313, 316, 317, 318, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 339, 341, 356, 357, 364
'Isma'il Haqqi Pasha, 205, 206
—— Pasha, 106, 108, 112
Italy (Italian), 216, 218, 274, 325, 333, 334, 335, 336, 360
'Izzat Pasha, 216, 217

Ja'afira (clan of Shammar), 130
Jabal 'Aja, *q.v.*
—— Shammar, *q.v.*
Jabir ibn Sabah, *q.v.*
——, Rahma ibn, 86, 104
Jabrin oasis, 171
Jacob, Colonel H. F., 262, 333
Jafar (Hasa), 62
Jahra, 69, 170, 222
Jalajil, 18, 34
Ja'lan province, 111, 363
Jamahir (section of Dawasir), 52
Jamaniya wells, 64
Janubiya, 18
Jarrab, 20, 108, 117, 233, 235, 257
Jask, 184
Jauf, 28, 63, 89, 133, 134, 135, 140, 146, 197, 198, 231, 277, 279, 281, 287, 288, 289
Jerusalem, 284
Jews, xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, 260
Jidda, 1, 26, 83, 86, 87, 88, 95, 104, 111, 115, 125, 212, 213, 237, 250, 251, 254, 271, 272, 302, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 317, 318, 319, 320, 322, 323, 324, 325, 330, 331, 337, 339, 344, 347, 354
——, Treaty of, 235, 340, 341, 342
Jifan wells, Abu, 171
Jihad, *see* Holy War.
Jiluwi, 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Musa'id ibn, 283
——, 'Abdullah ibn, 172, 175, 177, 201, 351, 352
——, Fahad ibn 'Abdullah ibn, 351, 352
—— ibn Sa'ud, *q.v.*
Jinn, 38
Jisha (Hasa), 47, 62
Jithamiya, 281
Jizan, 217
Jordan, S. R., 320
Jubail (Hasa), 61, 66, 115
—— ridge, 172
Jubaila, 5, 19

Jubair, Shaikh (of Kuwait), 123
Juda (Hasa), 142
Judaida (Hijaz), 93
Juwaisir al Husaini, 33, 34

Ka'ba, 83, 138, 250, 338, 341, 364
Kabida, 222
Kaf, 289
Karbala, 81, 84, 85, 89
Kaukaban, 210
Keir, Sir W. Grant, 110
Khabra, 36, 99, 187
Khafs, 229
Khaibar, 85, 135, 140, 197, 287, 294
Khali, Rub' al, 141, 142
Khalid tribe, Bani, 7, 11, 18, 19, 25, 36, 41, 43, 48, 59, 69, 106, 108, 115, 142, 143, 144, 147
—— ibn Luwai, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— —— Sulaim, *q.v.*
—— Pasha, 106, 107
Khalifa, *see* Calif.
—— family, 80, 115, 164
——, 'Isa ibn, 142, 162, 163
Kharag Island, 120
Kharj, 18, 19, 25, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 40, 147, 148, 152, 153, 173, 174, 220
Khartum, 236
Khaz'al ibn Mardao, Shaikh, 204, 233
Khedive (of Egypt), 213
Khubub district, 155, 186
Khumaiyis (slave), 13, 14
Khurma, 258, 259, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 276, 292, 294, 311
Khurshid Pasha, 112, 113, 132, 133
King-Crane Commission, 273, 274
—— of the Arab Countries, 254
—— of the Hijaz, 112, 215, 254, 262, 265, 302, 303, 307, 308, 311, 324, 325, 326, 327, 329, 330, 331, 335, 338, 339
—— of the Hijaz and Najd, 22, 154, 339, 340, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 364
King of 'Iraq, 262, 275, 280, 282
—— of Syria, 262, 274, 275
Kitchener, Lord, 238
Knox, Colonel S. G., 293, 294, 299
Kurds (Kurdistan), 86, 87
Kuria Muria Islands, 122
Kut (Hufuf), 60, 229
Kut al Amara, 234, 245
Kuwait, 25, 44, 61, 63, 75, 80, 86, 104, 123, 127, 141, 144, 155, 156, 157, 158, 161, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 179, 184, 185, 190, 203, 222, 231, 233, 235, 257, 261, 276, 280, 286, 290, 291, 293, 294, 298, 303, 343, 351, 352, 353, 354, 360, 362
—— Conference, 255, 293, 298, 299, 300, 301

Labour Government, British, 358, 361
Lahj (Aden), 116, 359
Laila, 221
Lajj, Umm, 249
Lami, Ibn, 354
Lansdowne, Lord, 162, 185
Lawrence, T. E., 234, 251, 252, 253, 254, 258, 259, 265, 266, 292, 308
Leachman, Lt.-Colonel G. E., 161, 203, 220, 229, 263
League of Nations, 262, 358
Lebanon, 274
Legation, Arab, 332
Legations at Jidda, Foreign, 317, 354
Lina wells, 342
Linga, 92
Lisan, Abal (near Ma'an), 253
Literalism, 55
Lith, 312
Locusts, 19, 67, 68, 207
London, 130, 185, 265, 272, 277, 332, 345
Lords, House of, 162
Luhaiya, 261
Luwai, Khalid ibn Mansur ibn, 270, 270, 311

Ma'adin tribe, 70
Ma'an, 89, 146, 253, 295, 313, 314, 315, 316, 356, 357, 358
Mabaidh, 34, 35
Machinery, 337
MacMahon, Sir Henry, 236, 237, 238, 242, 243, 244, 245, 247, 267, 273, 298, 360
Madain Salih, 255, 258
Madina, xvi, 8, 37, 39, 83, 87, 88, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 104, 107, 132, 194, 195, 197, 214, 239, 247, 251, 252, 253, 254, 298, 303, 308, 317, 318, 319, 323, 324, 330, 339, 358

Maghrabi, 98
Mahashir (section of Bani Khalid), 41
Mahdi 'Abdullah, Imam, 105
—— 'Ali Khan, 79
—— (Messiah), 55
Mahmal district, 18, 19, 99
—— (holy carpet), 88, 325, 340, 341
Maidi, 261
Maisalun, 274
Majid ibn 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
—— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'id, *q.v.*
—— —— Subhan, *q.v.*
Majidi (Turkish coin), 219
Majma'a, 18, 34, 150, 175, 199
Makharim (section of Dawasir), 40, 45, 46
Malcolm, Sir John 80
Mamelukes, 75
Manakha, 210
Mandate, viii, 260, 262, 263, 273, 274, 279, 280, 285, 290, 295, 296, 300, 314, 356, 367, 358
Manfuha, 7, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 40, 108
Marghani, Saiyid 'Ali, 239
Marib, Dam of, xvi
Marid fort (Jauf), 135
Maritime Truce, *see* Truce.
Marsina, 240, 242, 245, 247
Masal wells, 64
Mash'an ibn Hadhdhal, *q.v.*
Masharifa, 8
Mashhur, Ibn, 354
Masqat, 78, 79, 80, 90, 94, 105, 120, 121, 123, 125, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 184, 185, 261, 363
Materialism, 9, 10, 53, 55
Matrah, 78
Matrimonial alliances, 141, 197, 198, 203
Mawiya wells, 98
Maxwell, General Sir J., 236
Mazyad ibn Sa'dun, *q.v.*
Mecca (Meccan), xvi, xviii, 1, 2, 8, 23, 38, 39, 50, 53, 57, 70, 71, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 95, 98, 110, 114, 115, 118, 125, 126, 137, 138, 184, 197, 211, 212, 214, 215, 217, 221, 237, 238, 243, 245, 247, 250, 251, 252, 270, 271, 272, 277, 279, 280, 298, 299, 301, 303, 304, 305, 306, 308, 309, 311, 314, 315, 316, 319, 323, 324, 325, 330, 336, 338, 340, 350, 360, 364
Mediterranean, xvi, 169, 240
Meissner Pasha, 214
Mesopotamia, *see* 'Iraq.
Messiah, *see* Mahdi.
Middle East Department, 248, 267
Midhat Pasha, 142, 144, 147, 162
Midian, 214
Minaea, xvi
Mines, 202, 230, 236, 310
Misfir ibn Nuqaihan, 72
Mish'al ibn Tashid, *q.v.*
Mishari ibn Mu'ammar, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
Mission, American Dutch Church, 164, 292
Mistawi plain, 37
Mit'ab ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
Montagu, E. S., 267, 268
Mosul, 244, 322, 330
Motor-car (transport, etc.), 300, 302, 307, 316, 319, 321, 322, 323, 345, 350, 351
Mu'aiwij Baqa'a, 258
Mu'ammar dynasty, 13, 19
——, Fahad ibn, 219, 220
——, Hamad ibn Nasir ibn, 71
——, Mishari ibn, 16, 19
——, Muhammad ibn Mishari ibn, 105, 106
——, Sultan ibn Muhaisin ibn, 19
——, 'Uthman ibn, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Mubairik, Husain ibn, 251
—— ibn 'Adwan, 18
Mubarak ibn 'Abdul Hadi, 45, 52, 65
—— —— Sabah, *q.v.*
—— —— Suwait, *q.v.*
Mubarak, Nakhl, 252
Mubarraz, 19, 49, 61, 62, 65, 66, 70, 115
Mudhnib, 200
Mufti, 23, 27
Muhaina ibn 'Amran, 59
Muhammad Abal Khail, *q.v.*
—— al 'Aun, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Huzaimi, 13
—— —— Idrisi, *q.v.*
—— —— Mansur ibn Yahya Hamid al Din, Imam, 206, 207, 209
—— —— Sabah, *q.v.*
—— —— Tawil, *q.v.*
—— 'Ali Pasha (of Egypt), 92, 93, 95 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 107, 111, 112, 114, 115, 181
—— —— —— (Wali of Yaman), 212, 216

Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, *q.v.*
—— —— 'Aidh, *q.v.*
—— —— 'Ali, *q.v.*
—— —— 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
—— —— Dawwas, *q.v.*
—— —— Ghushaiyan, 60, 63
—— —— Husain, *q.v.*
—— —— Mu'aiqal, 53, 63, 65, 69, 70
—— —— Mu'ammar, *q.v.*
—— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
—— Rashad, Sultan, 216
——, the Prophet, xviii, 5, 8, 9, 10, 47, 54, 88, 93, 98, 239, 241, 254, 297, 298, 317, 318, 364
Muhammara, 204, 233
——, Treaty of, 286, 290, 291, 315, 342
Muhanna Abal Khail, 118, 190
—— family, 190
——, Hasan ibn, 148
——, Raudhat al, 192
——, Salih ibn, 190, 191, 192, 193
Muhawwis ibn Shuqair, 65, 66
Muhsin, Sharif, *q.v.*
Mujhim ibn Sha'lan, *q.v.*
Mukha (Mocha), 87, 261
Mukhtar Pasha, Ahmad, 126, 205, 206
Mulaida, 155, 176, 177, 186
Munitions, 36, 60, 97, 99, 100, 101, 156, 167, 174, 210, 225, 247, 256
Muntafiq tribe, 41, 42, 44, 48, 68, 69, 75, 85, 86, 89, 144, 147, 148, 157, 169, 204, 222, 228, 264
Murra tribe, 142, 144, 170, 229
Musa ibn 'Isa ibn Haris, 15
——, Wadi, *see* Petra.
Musil, Alois, ix, 161
Muslim Congress, 318, 325, 337, 338
Muslit ibn Rubai'an, *q.v.*
Mustafa al Idrisi, *q.v.*
—— Bey, 95, 96
—— Kamal, 297
Mustajidda, 132
Mutair tribe, 51, 52, 53, 98, 107, 108, 112, 117, 142, 170, 175, 187, 191, 192, 193, 199, 200, 217, 225, 228, 281, 290, 319, 343, 346, 353, 354
Mutasarrif, 195, 230
Mutawakkil, Imam, 116
Mutiny, Indian, 123
Muwaishir, Hamad ibn, 288, 289
Muzairib, 89
Na'athil (Hufuf), 66
Nabataeans, xvi
Nabqiya, 32
Nadir Shah (of Persia), 4
Nafidh Pasha, 144
Nafud, 44, 52, 63, 176, 194
Nahis al Dhuwaibi, *q.v.*
Naif ibn Hithlain, *q.v.*
Najaf, 89, 138, 278
Na'jan, 19, 34, 35, 174
Najd, 4, 7, 8, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 37, 39, 43, 44, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 60, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 81, 86, 95, 97, 105, 107, 112, 113, 118, 120, 126, 128, 131, 143, 144, 145, 147, 148, 157, 158, 160, 169, 170, 173, 176, 178, 179, 180, 193, 195, 196, 199, 218, 219, 220, 222, 223, 226, 258, 263, 264, 265, 268, 270, 284, 285, 286, 290, 293, 294, 295, 300, 303, 316, 319, 326, 328, 329, 331, 332, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 347, 350, 351, 352, 354, 362
Najm, 'Ain, 59
Najran, 20, 29, 30, 31, 46, 65
Nakhl Mubarak, *q.v.*
Napoleon, 58, 75, 79, 103
Nashmi, Ibrahim al, 318
Nasir al Shaimi, *q.v.*
—— ibn Sa'dun, *q.v.*
—— —— Yahya, Sharif, *q.v.*
National Assembly, Turkish, 297, 298
Nationalism, xviii, xix, 10, 53, 180, 181, 182, 183, 204, 208, 226, 227, 293, 297
Naurus Bey, 310
Navy (naval vessel), 26, 86, 90, 92, 105, 110, 111, 125, 144, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 170, 185, 232, 233, 252, 253, 314, 320, 325, 354
Nelson, Lord, 75
Neutrality, 90, 241, 308, 313, 314, 356, 359
Niebuhr, Carsten, 26, 27
Nifi, 289
Nomad (nomadic, etc.), 6, 114, 128, 132, 180, 223, 224, 226
Nubian, 82
Nughaimish, 52
Nuqta, Abu, 87
Nura bint Rashid, 197
—— —— Sa'ud, 177
Nuri ibn Sha'lan, *q.v.*

Oil, 336, 355
Oman, 4, 26, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 85, 87, 90, 91, 92, 97, 103, 110, 118, 122, 124, 127, 164, 167, 362, 363
Ottoman, *see* Turkey.

Pagan (paganism), xviii, 4, 5, 17, 114
Palestine, 75, 240, 244, 259, 274, 285, 295, 298, 299, 313, 314, 356, 358
Palgrave, W. G., 119
Palmyra, 146
Paris, 123, 259, 265
Parliament, 121, 311
Pasture (pastoral), 9, 22, 128, 188, 202, 203, 223, 224, 286, 290, 291, 342
Peace Conference, 259, 262
Pelly, Colonel Lewis, 119, 120, 124, 125, 162
Perim, 123, 126
Persia (Persian), xviii, 4, 26, 39, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 90, 104, 121, 122, 123, 135, 164, 165, 166, 168, 204, 240, 309, 316, 317, 322, 325
Persian Gulf, 1, 2, 4, 25, 26, 27, 54, 61, 79, 80, 91, 92, 103, 104, 109, 111, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 127, 137, 143, 157, 161, 162, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 184, 185, 231, 234, 236, 240, 245, 255, 275, 293, 341, 354, 360
—— War, 123
Petra, xvi, 313, 356
Picot, H., 244
Pilgrimage (pilgrims), 1, 23, 28, 38, 39, 71, 77, 80, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 90, 118, 128, 129, 130, 134, 137, 138, 140, 153, 154, 184, 197, 213, 214, 216, 271, 277, 303, 309, 312, 313, 317, 322, 323, 325, 326, 327, 337, 338, 340, 341, 345, 349
Piracy, 2, 26, 82, 85, 86, 90, 91, 94, 104, 105, 110. 111, 121
Pitts, Joseph, 1
Plague, 26, 83, 184
Plebiscite, 273, 280
Poet (poetry), 68, 137, 196
Poison, 114, 135, 159, 198
Political Officer, Chief, 233, 248, 255
Polytheism, 71
Population, 140, 226, 227, 243, 245, 362
Portugal (Portuguese), 1, 2, 4
Postal Conference, International, 332
Prayer, 71, 72
Press, The, 323
Primogeniture, 78
Prophet, *see* Muhammad.
Protectorate, 80, 121, 166, 169, 209, 261, 333, 334, 335, 336, 353, 359

Qahtan tribe, 40, 43, 45, 51, 53, 64, 72, 74, 176, 200
Qaim-maqam, 322
Qajar dynasty, 79
Qara (Jauf), 135
Qara'a (Qasim), 155, 186
Qarayin, 17
Qarin (Hasa), 61
Qariya wells, 48, 69
Qarmala, Hadi ibn Ghanim ibn, 45, 50, 63, 64, 65, 73, 74
Qasab, 19
Qasim, 22, 25, 27, 31, 33, 35, 37, 43, 47, 61, 63, 74, 97, 98, 106, 107, 108, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 126, 129, 132, 140, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 155, 156, 175, 176, 184, 186, 187, 189, 190, 191, 193, 194, 197, 199, 201, 219, 220, 231, 232, 258, 281
Qāsim ibn Thani, *q.v.*
—— Zainal, 311
Qasr 'Uqaiyil, 188
Qatar, 47, 49, 58, 64, 80, 86, 155, 156, 158, 163, 190, 191
Qatif, 54, 61, 77, 103, 110, 113, 115, 124, 230
Qawasim, 26, 79, 91, 92, 94, 104, 105, 110
Qidhla plain, 20
Qishm Island, 92, 105, 111
Quai d'Orsay, 167
Quai'iya, 17, 219
Quarantine, 184, 185, 340
Queen of the Hijaz, 306
Qufar, 132
Quhra tribes, 262
Qunfidha, 83, 87, 96, 217, 276, 312
Qunsuliya, 65, 74
Qurain (Kuwait), 80
Quran, 8, 10, 42, 72, 172, 309, 311
Qusaiba, 186
Qusaibi family, 229
Qusair, 98

Rabi', Umm (wells), 69
Rabi'a (subsection of 'Abda Shammar), 130
Rabigh, 213, 251, 252, 312

Raghama, 319
Raghba, 17
Rahma ibn Jabir, 86, 104
Raids, Badawin, 39, 41, 63, 77, 81, 83, 89, 97, 99, 133, 134, 169, 171, 174, 175, 178, 182, 183, 188, 191, 193, 197, 202, 203, 228, 229, 278, 284, 288, 315, 342, 343, 352
Railways, 169, 170, 184, 214, 215, 236
Rain, 49, 66, 67, 176, 192, 202, 213
Ramdhan, 52, 59, 65, 194
Raniya, 63, 70, 73, 74, 218
Ras al Khaima, 79, 85, 92, 94, 104, 105, 110
Rashid, 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Mit'ab ibn, 139, 158, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 182, 184, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 197
——, 'Abdullah ibn 'Ali ibn, 109, 112, 113, 117, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 196
——, —— —— Mit'ab ibn, 197, 277, 278, 279, 281
——, —— —— Talal ibn, 278, 281
—— al Duraibi, *q.v.*
——, 'Ali ibn, 130
——, Badr ibn Talal ibn, 136, 139
——, Bandar ibn Talal ibn, 136, 137, 138, 139
——, Dhari ibn Hamud ibn 'Ubaid ibn, 198
—— dynasty (Rashidian, etc.), 109, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 134, 136, 152, 159, 172, 173, 175, 176, 178, 179, 193, 196, 199, 218, 277, 281, 283, 285, 287
——, Faisal ibn Hamud ibn 'Ubaid ibn, 197, 198
——, Hamud ibn 'Ubaid ibn, 137, 138, 139, 140, 159, 196
——, Majid ibn Bandar ibn, 139
——, —— —— Hamud ibn 'Ubaid ibn, 159, 196
——, Mish'al ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn, 196
——, Mit'ab ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn, 193, 194, 196, 197
——, —— —— 'Abdullah ibn, 134, 136, 139, 145
——, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn, 196
——, —— —— 'Abdullah ibn, 134, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 160, 169, 170, 173, 178, 182, 186, 193, 197
——, —— —— Talal ibn, 278, 281, 282, 283
——, Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn, 196, 197, 198, 203, 204, 219, 228, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 255, 256, 257, 258, 263, 264, 277, 278, 281, 283
——, —— —— Hamud ibn 'Ubaid ibn, 197, 198
——, Sultan ibn Hamud ibn 'Ubaid ibn, 196, 197, 199, 200
——, Talal ibn, 117, 134, 135, 136, 137, 140, 278
——, 'Ubaid ibn 'Ali ibn, 113, 130, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 196
Rass, 35, 36, 97, 98, 187, 188, 191
Rassite dynasty, 206
Rastaq, 78, 79 124, 125
Raudha (Sudair), 37
Raudhat al Muhanna, *q.v.*
Rauf Pasha, 126, 145
Raunkiaer, Barclay, 161
Rebellion, Mesopotamian, 275, 280
Reconciliation, 354
Red Sea, 1, 2, 3, 82, 92, 115, 116, 205, 236, 237, 240, 249, 261, 275, 335
Refugees, Shammar, 283, 284, 290
Republican, 118, 129, 317, 318, 338
Resident in Persian Gulf, British, 94, 119, 120, 123, 162, 293
Revenue, 140, 245, 302, 330
Revolt, Arab, 237, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 255, 263
Rice, 138
Rifa'a (Hufuf), 66
Rifles, 73, 167, 168, 231, 278, 321
Rijban (section of Dawasir), 46
Rima, Wadi, 32, 187, 188
Riots, 125
Riqai, 354
Riyadh, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 29, 31, 40, 46, 106, 108, 109, 112, 113, 117, 119, 122, 124, 131, 135, 136, 142, 145, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 183, 191, 193, 198, 199, 201, 202, 220, 222, 223, 231, 256, 258, 281, 283, 339, 344, 347, 349, 364
—— Congress, 280, 347, 348

Riyal (Maria Theresa dollar), 116, 123
Rock-worship, 4, 45
Rome (Roman), xvii, xviii
Rub‘ al Khali, *q.v.*
Rubai‘a al Qaid, 50
Rubai‘an, Hamud ibn, 73
——, Muslit ibn, 145
Rubaiya‘ ibn Zaid, *q.v.*
——, Qaid ibn, 64
Rumaih, Al abu, 57
Rumhain district, 52
Russia (Russian), 161, 166, 167, 168, 169, 213, 238, 244, 310
Rutter, Eldon, 312
Ruwaidha, 40
Ruwala tribe, 108, 134, 145, 146, 198, 203, 287, 288, 354

Sabæa, xvi
Sabah, ‘Abdullah ibn, 144
——, Ahmad ibn Jabir ibn, 353
—— family, 80
——, Jabir ibn Mubarak ibn, 175, 235
——, Jarrah ibn, 156, 168
——, Mubarak ibn ‘Abdullah ibn, 144, 156, 157, 158, 161, 168, 169, 170, 171, 175, 176, 179, 184, 186, 190, 191, 192, 199, 203, 204, 222, 231, 233, 235
——, Muhammad ibn, 156, 158, 168
——, Salim ibn Mubarak ibn, 235, 257, 264
——, Shaikh (of Kuwait), 123
Sabakh (Buraida), 200
Sabiya, 216
Sa‘d ibn Qatnam, 63, 64
—— —— Sa‘ud, *q.v.*
Sa‘da, 206
Sadlier, Captain G. F., 103, 104, 105
Sa‘dun, ‘Ajaimi Pasha ibn, 228, 232
——, Falih ibn Nasir ibn, 147
—— ibn ‘Arai‘ar, *q.v.*
—— —— Dahham, *q.v.*
——, Mazyad ibn Nasir ibn, 148
——, Nasir ibn, 69, 144, 147, 148
— Pasha, 157, 158, 169, 171, 203, 204, 222, 228
Sadus, 106
Safa wells, 59
Safra, Wadi, 93, 252
Safwan, 44
Sahba valley, 33
Sahban (section of Mutair), 49
Sa‘id, Ahmad ibn, 26, 77
——, Badr ibn, 87, 90, 91
——, Faisal ibn Turki ibn, 165, 166, 167, 168
——, Hamid ibn Sa‘id ibn Ahmad ibn, 78
——, Hilal ibn Ahmad ibn, 78
—— ibn Ahmad ibn Sa‘id, 78, 79, 110
—— —— Sultan ibn Sa‘id, 90, 91, 94, 104, 105, 110, 111, 121, 122, 164
——, Majid ibn, 122
—— Pasha, 217
Sa‘id, Qais ibn Ahmad ibn, 78
——, Salim ibn Sultan ibn, 90, 91
——, —— —— Thuwaini ibn, 124, 125
——, Sultan ibn Ahmad ibn, 78, 79, 80, 82, 86, 87, 90
——, Thuwaini ibn, 122, 124, 125, 164
——, Turki ibn, 124, 125, 164, 165
Saif ibn Sultan, 78
—— —— ‘Arai‘ar, *q.v.*
Saih (Aflaj), 221
Saiyid, 78, 79
Sakaka, 135, 288
Sakha wells, 145, 270
Sakhr tribe, Bani, 289
Salih al Najjar, 65, 66
—— ibn ‘Ali, *q.v.*
Salim ibn Sabah, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa‘id, *q.v.*
—— —— Subhan, *q.v.*
Salonica, 95, 246
Salt deposits, 288, 294
—— Villages (Wadi Sirhan), 288, 316
Samawa, 89, 278
Sami Pasha, 194, 195
San‘a, 3, 116, 126, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 217, 333, 334, 336, 337, 364
Sanitary administration, *see* Quarantine.
San Remo, 273
Saqar, Sultan ibn, 86, 91, 111
Sarif, 170, 173, 178
Sattam Abal Khail, *q.v.*
—— ibn Sha‘lan, *q.v.*
Sa‘ud, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn ‘Abdul Rahman ibn, ix, 13, 22, 152, 154, 156, 157, 160 ff.

Sa‘ud, ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 41, 42, 44, 47, 50, 51, 55, 57, 62, 64, 65, 68, 70, 73, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 88, 106, 159
——, —— —— —— Sa‘ud ibn, 152, 177
——, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abdul Rahman ibn, 349
——, —— —— Faisal ibn, 117, 119, 135, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 177, 190
——, —— —— Muhammad ibn, 22, 33, 34
——, —— —— Sa‘ud ibn (1), 85, 89, 95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 103, 106, 152
——, —— —— —— —— (2), 153
——, —— —— Turki ibn, 142
——, ‘Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal ibn, 119, 145, 147, 148, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 161, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 189, 223, 339
——, ‘Ali ibn Muhammad ibn, 24
—— dynasty, xix, 9, 24, 103, 106, 108, 109, 151, 153, 154, 156, 158, 172, 175, 177, 276
——, Faisal ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn, 272, 276, 286, 319, 329, 331, 338
——, —— —— Muhammad ibn, 15
——, —— —— Sa‘d ibn (‘Arafa), 177, 221
——, —— —— Sa‘ud ibn, 96, 97, 99
——, —— —— Turki ibn, 108, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 124, 126, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 151, 142, 152, 153, 173, 220, 223, 230
——, Farhan ibn, 12
——, Hasan ibn Mishari ibn, 52, 69
——, ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— —— —— —— Sa‘ud, 281, 329, 352
—— —— —— —— —— —— (‘Arafa), 177, 221
—— —— Faisal ibn Sa‘ud, 119, 141, 142, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 153, 177, 218, 220
—— —— Hamud ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud (‘Arafa), 177
—— —— —— —— —— ,15
Sa‘ud, Jiluwi ibn Turki ibn, 112, 113
——, Khalid ibn Sa‘ud ibn, 112, 113
——, Mishari ibn ‘Abdul Rahman ibn, 108, 109, 131
——, —— ——, 12, 14, 31
——, —— —— Sa‘ud ibn, 106
——, Muhammad ibn, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 85, 88, 113
——, —— —— ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn, 319
——, —— —— ‘Abdul Rahman ibn, 172, 191, 279, 281
——, —— —— Faisal ibn, 119, 142, 147, 151, 154
——, —— —— Sa‘ud ibn (al Ghazlan), 149, 153, 177
——, Sa‘d ibn ‘Abdul Rahman ibn, 173, 219, 220, 257
——, ——, ——, Sa‘ud ibn, 153, 177
——, Sa‘ud ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn, 22, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 40, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 69, 70, 74, 81, 82, 83, 85, 87, 88, 90, 92, 94, 95, 96, 103, 106, 112, 159
——, Thunaian ibn, 12
——, Turki ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz ibn (‘Arafa), 221, 222
——, ——, ——, ‘Abdullah ibn, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 130, 131
Schism, 58
Sexual laxity, 10
Seychelles, 122
Sha‘ba, (Hasa), 60
Shadid, Ibn (shaikh of Harb), 94
Shafi‘i sect, 72
Shahran tribe, 70, 82
Shaimi, Nasir ibn ‘Abdul Rahman al, 115
Shakespear, Captain W. H. I., 161, 231, 233, 234, 236, 256
Shakir, Sharif, *q.v.*
Sha‘lan family, 277
——, Mujhim ibn Muhaid ibn, 288
——, Nuri ibn, 198, 203, 279, 281, 287 288, 289
——, Sahn ibn Durai‘i ibn, 108
——, Sattam ibn, 145
——, Sultan ibn Nawwaf ibn, 287, 288
Shamas (Buraida), 36
Shamasiya, 108
Shammar tribe, 44, 53, 98, 108, 109, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 138,

146, 150, 151, 155, 170, 175, 176, 178, 182, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 203, 204, 233, 234, 258, 277, 278, 280, 281, 282, 283, 287
——, Jabal, 7, 28, 44, 53, 63, 112, 118, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 134, 136, 141, 145, 149, 150, 156, 193, 197, 198, 201, 277
Shaqra, 17, 65, 99, 156, 175
Shar‘ law, 48, 207, 211, 225, 324, 327, 329, 348
Sha‘ra, 52, 219
Sharif (Ashraf), Sharifian, 3, 39, 57, 65, 72, 74, 82, 87, 114, 115, 116, 118, 126, 212, 213, 258, 259, 268, 270, 275, 279, 284, 285, 286, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 298, 300, 301, 303, 306, 311, 317, 318, 321, 326, 329, 331, 356, 360
—— ‘Abdillah ibn Muhammad al ‘Aun, 215
—— ‘Abdul ‘Aziz, 51, 52
—— ‘Abdullah ibn Husain (Amir of Trans-Jordan), 232, 238, 239, 247, 250, 251, 252, 253, 262, 269, 270, 275, 284, 285, 287, 288, 289, 293, 295, 296, 298, 299, 309, 314
—— —— —— Muhammad al‘ Aun, 125, 205, 212, 215
—— ‘Abdul Mu‘in, 82, 83
—— ‘Abdul Muttalib ibn Ghalib, 112, 125, 212
—— Ahmad ibn Sa‘id, 23, 27, 50
—— ‘Ali ibn Husain, 247, 251, 252, 253, 296, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 311, 310, 313, 315, 316, 319, 320, 322
—— —— —— Muhammad ibn ‘Aun, 215
—— —— Pasha ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad al ‘Aun, 214
—— ‘Aun al Rafiq, 213, 214
—— Faisal ibn Husain (King of ‘Iraq), 247, 251, 252, 253, 254, 259, 262, 265, 266, 274, 275, 279, 280, 282, 285, 292, 299, 301, 309, 320, 354
—— Fuhaid, 64, 73
—— Ghalib, 27, 50, 51, 52, 53, 58, 61, 64, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 95, 112
—— Husain ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad al ‘Aun (King of the Hijaz), 112, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 221, 228, 232, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 271, 272, 273, 276, 277, 279, 284, 292, 293, 294, 296, 298, 299, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 310, 313, 314, 322, 327, 360
—— —— —— Muhammad al ‘Aun, 212
—— Mansur, 23
—— Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Mu‘in al ‘Aun, 112, 115, 116, 117, 125, 205, 212, 213, 215
—— Muhsin, 250
—— Nasir ibn Yahya, 64
—— Pasha (Wali of Hijaz), 83, 86
Sharif Shakir, 52
—— Surur, 27, 38, 39, 95
—— Yahya ibn Surur, 95, 112
—— Zaid ibn Husain, 250, 299
Shatt al ‘Arab, 75, 240
Shaubak, 253, 313, 356
Shauki, Sha‘ib, 170
Shawwal, month of, 60
Shia‘ (Shi‘ite), 84, 89, 91
Shihiya, 194
Shinana, 97, 18
Shiqqa, 192
Shuqaiq, 61
Sibila plain, 349
Sidqi Pasha, 190, 194
Sinai, 231, 240
Sirah (Jauf), 63
Sirhan, Wadi, 1, 89, 140, 146, 198, 287, 288, 289, 294, 316
Sirr province, 51, 176, 194, 200
Slave-trade (slaves, etc.), 1, 15, 69, 70, 82, 110, 120, 121, 123, 125, 126, 139, 163, 164, 165, 167, 171, 172, 185, 197, 278, 288, 341, 360
Sophia, St., 102
Sounding Sands, 93
Soviet Government, 325, 337
—— Trading, 337
Stambul, 215
Stockades, 35, 36
Stoning, xix, 11
Storrs, Sir R., 251, 255, 256
Stotzingen mission, Von, 249, 250
Subai‘ tribe, 19, 20, 22, 40, 59, 70, 96, 142
Subaih (section of Bani Khalid), 41
Subaihiya, 69, 70, 231

Subhan family, 197, 201, 277
——, Hamud ibn, 197, 198
——, Ibrahim ibn, 283
——, Majid ibn, 177, 178
——, Salim ibn, 152, 153, 154
——, Zamil ibn, 197, 198, 203
Subhi Bey Nashat, 286
Sublime Porte, *see* Turk.
Subsidy, 267, 269, 272, 285, 287, 290, 292, 303, 359
Succession, 47
Sudair province, 17, 18, 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37, 106, 149, 150, 151, 170, 175, 176, 199, 231
Sudan, 165, 209, 239
——, Port, 247, 250
Suez, 93, 97, 98, 231, 236
—— Canal, 126, 205, 236, 252
Suhar (Oman), 121, 122, 124
Suhul tribe, 40
Suicide, 135, 136, 140
Sulai', Wadi, 174
Sulaim, 'Ali ibn Zamil al, 155
—— family, 177
——, Khalid ibn, 155
—— Zamil ibn, 118, 135, 148, 154, 155, 156, 177
Sulaiman al Muhammad (ruler of Hasa), 11
—— —— Wushaiqiri, 13
—— ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, *q.v.*
—— —— 'Affaisan, *q.v.*
—— Pasha (of 'Asir), 217, 218
—— —— (of Baghdad), 43, 74, 77, 89
—— Shafiq Kamali Pasha, 228, 231
——, Shaikh 'Abdullah al, 331
Sulaimi, 132
Sulaimiya, 33, 174
Sulaiyil, 46
Sultan ibn Bijad, *q.v.*
—— —— Mu'ammar, *q.v.*
—— —— Rashid, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'id, *q.v.*
—— —— Saqar, *q.v.*
—— —— Sha'lan, *q.v.*
—— (of Najd), 280, 282, 290, 292, 316, 318, 322, 324, 325, 339
—— (of Oman), 78, 185, 363
—— (of Turkey), 2, 23, 27, 88, 97, 106, 121, 183, 207, 211, 239, 297
—— (of Zanzibar), 122
Summan desert, 34, 69
Sunni, 24, 58
Suq al Shuyukh, 43, 89, 201
Sur (Oman), 111, 120, 124, 363
Surur, Sharif, *q.v.*
Suwaidara, 98
Suwailim, 'Abdul Rahman ibn, 230
——, 'Abdullah ibn, 12
——, Ahmad ibn, 12, 13
——, Musa'id ibn, 175
Suwaiqiya, 98
Suwait, Ibn (shaikh of Dhafir), 61, 17
——, Mubarak ibn, 222
Switzerland, 325
Sykes, Sir Mark, 244
Sykes-Picot Agreement, 244
Syria (Syrian), 6, 75, 88, 89, 95, 101, 114, 115, 140, 204, 224, 234, 240, 242, 244, 246, 252, 254, 258, 259, 262, 265, 267, 269, 273, 274, 275, 283, 284, 285, 287, 288, 298, 309, 319, 329, 331, 341, 342, 356, 358

Tafila, 253
Tahsin Pasha al Faqir, 309, 311
Taif, 72, 82, 83, 87, 95, 97, 112, 218, 250, 251, 269, 270, 300, 301, 304, 305, 306, 308, 310, 330
Taima, 135, 140, 198, 213, 287, 294
Taisiya, 281
Taiy, 7
Ta'izz, 208
Talal ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
Talib al Naqib, Saiyid, 195, 204, 231, 279
Tamim tribe, Bani, 7, 8
Tamra, 46
Tarafiya, 117, 170, 200
Taufiq Pasha, 116, 126, 209
Tawil, Shaikh Muhammad al, 306, 307, 308
Teheran, 275
Telegraphs, 124, 184, 208, 302, 324
Telephones, 251, 302, 307
Thadiq, 16, 18, 176
Thamir, Hamud ibn, 75
Thani, Ahmad ibn, 190, 191
——, Qasim ibn, 155, 158, 190
Tharmida, 15, 16, 107, 147, 156, 175
Thomas, Lowell, 265
Thunaian, 'Abdullah ibn, 113, 114
——, Ahmad ibn, 230, 273, 286
—— ibn Sa'ud, *q.v.*
Thuwaini (chief of Muntafiq), 41, 42, 43, 44, 48, 58, 68, 69, 74, 77, 85
—— ibn Sa'id, *q.v.*

Tihama, 3, 87, 105, 116, 126, 216, 217, 336
Tobacco, 88
Toll (on caravans), 137, 138, 141
Traditions (of the Prophet), 72, 309
Train-wrecking, 253
Trans-Jordan, 254, 259, 274, 275, 284, 285, 287, 290, 295, 296, 298, 299, 304, 309, 313, 314, 315, 316, 332, 333, 345, 356, 358
Treason, 93, 107, 199, 200, 221, 269, 305, 307, 311, 348, 351
Treaty (Agreement, etc.), 94, 97, 110, 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 162, 163, 165, 166, 167, 169, 201, 217, 231, 234, 235, 238, 239, 243, 245, 286, 291, 292, 308, 315, 316, 317, 320, 333, 334, 335, 337, 340, 341, 354, 355
Tree-worship, 4, 5, 45
Tribute, 89, 91, 116, 122, 124, 133, 134, 135, 146, 155, 165, 219
Tripoli, 216, 218
Trousers, 248
Truce, 83, 121, 122, 147, 344
Trucial chiefs (Coast), 121, 122, 124, 127, 162, 163, 165, 362
Truffle, 68
Tuma (Qasim), 43
Tunaib, 289
Turaba, 63, 218, 269, 271, 294, 301
Turaif (Dar'iya), 84, 101
Turk (Turkey, Turkish, etc.), 2, 3, 4, 23, 26, 27, 28, 39, 41, 43, 57, 75, 77, 83, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 93, 96, 97, 102, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 121, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 132, 133, 142, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 155, 156, 157, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 174, 176, 178, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 193, 194, 195, 198, 199, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 216, 217, 218, 219, 222, 224, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 247, 248, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 267, 269, 272, 279, 296, 297, 302, 306, 309, 311, 314, 317, 318, 321, 325, 333, 364
Turki ibn Sa'id, *q.v.*
—— —— Sa'ud, *q.v.*
Tusun Pasha, 93, 94, 95, 97
Tuwaiq, Jabal, 17, 40, 46, 66, 150, 229

'Ubaid ibn Rashid, *q.v.*
Ukhaidhar, 81
'Ulama, 50, 206, 211, 223, 239, 280, 297, 339, 347
Union and Progress, Committee of, 204
Unity, Arab, viii, 360, 361, 363
'Uqair, 47, 66, 115, 144, 230, 234, 275, 276, 287, 290, 291, 292, 342
——, Protocols of, 291, 315
'Usfan, 312
'Uthman al Madhaifi, 72, 82, 87, 95
—— ibn Mu'ammar, *q.v.*
—— Nuri Pasha, 213
'Uyun (Hasa), 60

Vaissière, Capitaine, 99
Varthema, Lodovico, 1
Versailles, 273
Viceroy, 92, 95, 100, 101, 114, 115, 122, 141, 162, 322, 329, 330
"Victory" Division, 309
"Viper," H.M.S., 79
Wafra wells, 48, 49, 353
Wahhabi (Wahhabism, etc.), *passim*.
Wahid al Din, Sultan, 297
Wajh, 249, 253
Waqf (religious endowment), 357
War, the Great, 126, 180, 199, 217, 232, 245, 254, 257, 258, 259, 260, 262, 263, 264, 265, 273, 277, 278, 292, 300, 301, 302, 333, 341, 356, 357, 358, 359, 361, 362
—— Office, 268, 269, 271
Washm, 17, 18, 20, 32, 35, 52, 63, 151, 170, 175, 176, 219
Water, 37, 44, 49, 107, 213, 227, 289, 290, 291, 303, 310, 313, 322
Whitehall, 245, 248, 259, 266, 316
"White Man's Burden," 361
Wilson, President, 273
——, Sir A. T., ix
Wingate, General Sir R., 236, 239
Wireless, 249, 302, 321, 347, 350, 351
Wudda'in (section of Dawasir), 46, 47
Wullamin (section of Dawasir), 46
Wushaiqir, 18

Yahya ibn Muhammad, Imam, 209, 210, 211, 216, 261, 263, 333, 335, 359

Yahya ibn Salih, 23
—— —— Surur, Sharif, *q.v.*
Yam tribe, 65, 141
Yamama, 32, 33, 34, 35, 47
Yaman (Yamani), xix, 2, 3, 4, 6, 20, 26, 27, 29, 31, 40, 87, 92, 95, 105, 115, 116, 118, 126, 141, 189, 190, 205, 206, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 216, 217, 236, 249, 250, 262, 276, 277, 325, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 359, 360, 363
Yanbu', 87, 93, 94, 97, 98, 249, 252, 253, 319, 330
Ya'riba dynasty, 4, 78
Yatab (near Hail), 258
"Young Arab" party, 242
Yusuf Pasha Ganj, 89

Za'b tribe, 75
Zahran, 97
Zaid, Badn ibn, 45
——, Barrak ibn, 40, 41
——, Dhawi (clan of Ashraf), 3, 212
—— ibn al Khattab, 5
—— —— 'Arai'ar, *q.v.*
Zaid, ibn Husain, Sharif, *q.v.*
—— —— Musa aba Zar', 13, 14
—— —— Zamil, *q.v.*
——, Rubaiya' ibn, 45, 46, 52, 65, 70, 73
Zaidi (Zaidite), 3, 206
Zaim Oghlou, 96
Zamil, (governor of Manfuha), 22
—— ibn Faris, *q.v.*
—— —— Subhan, *q.v.*
—— —— Sulaim, *q.v.*
——, Zaid ibn, 29, 32, 33, 34, 40
Zand dynasty (Persia), 79
Zanzibar, 120, 121, 122, 123, 165, 167
Zaraniq tribe, 208, 336
Zilfi, 16, 19, 22, 30, 32, 34, 35, 85, 150, 191, 233, 349
Zionism (Zionist, etc.), 238, 273
Ziziya, 300
Zubaida, Queen, 77
Zubair, 89, 222
Zubara (Qatar), 80, 163
Zwemer, Rev. S. M., 102, 160

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